THE BUCK STOPS HERE "At the end of the day, I'm responsible for everything that transpired," says President Aquino. LYNDON BOY

NEWS / A2
Palace declares Eid'l Fitr holiday on Sept. 10

BUSINESS / B1
New airports, LRT lines set in 2011

SPORTS / A17
HK pulls out of Asian U-18 soccer in Manila

AT A GLANCE

- Lim, Verzosa, Magtibay, Puno questioned at hostage hearing at DOJ
- Verzosa could have stopped SPO2 Gregorio Mendoza's arrest but didn't
- Lim pushed dismissal of hostage-taker from PNP
- At crucial point, Lim got hungry, invited Magtibay to Chinese dinner

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Saturday, September 4, 2010 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 25 / No. 268 P18

Bus hostage-taking deemed 'local crisis'

Noy takes full responsibility for fiasco

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT AQUINO yesterday said the Rizal Park hostage-taking fiasco showed deficiencies in police training and equipment to handle crisis situations, and claimed responsibility for what happened.

Mr. Aquino was asked for his reaction to Sen. Francis Escudero's remarks that Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo might have a difficult time getting confirmed by the Commission on Appointments because of the botched police operation that resulted in the death of eight Hong Kong tourists.

"Secretary Robredo will be able to explain," Mr. Aquino told reporters.

The President said that when he took Robredo into the Cabinet, he told him that the new government was consolidating the country's security forces and that "I will retain direct supervision of the PNP (Philippine National Police) until such time that other concerns have also been addressed."

Mr. Aquino said there was a need to improve the local government units, especially in their delivery of services.

"I asked (Robredo) to concentrate on that and I will retain the interim control over the PNP. At the end of the day, I am re-

NOY TAKES! A6

PLEASE EXPLAIN Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo (left) and Justice Secretary Leila de Lima question Interior Undersecretary Rico E. Puno (back to camera) at the formal investigation of the botched rescue of Hong Kong tourists held hostage on a bus by a dismissed policeman. EDWIN BACASMAS

Puno admits no training in hostage situations

By Nikko Dizon and Marlon Ramos

GOVERNMENT authorities considered the Aug. 23 hostage-taking a "local crisis" even if foreign nationals were involved, and the official in charge of the Philippine National Police was "not capable of handling hostage situations."

Interior Undersecretary Rico E. Puno yesterday made these admissions to the fact-finding committee investigating the police rescue operation that left eight Hong Kong tourists and the hostage-taker, dismissed cop Rolando Mendoza, dead.

The first day of the three-day marathon hearing, which was aired on live TV, revealed the seeming cavalier attitude of the national and local governments toward the daylong hostage crisis at Quirino Grandstand in Manila, with Puno heading on the strategy of Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim to simply exhaust Mendoza and hope he would release all the hostages unharmed.

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima chairs the Incident Investigation and Review Committee (IIRC) tasked by President Aquino to look into the police assault on the hijacked tour bus that was aired live on TV. Her vice-chair is Puno's

BUS! A6

'Reinstatement' letter undelivered

By Nikko Dizon

BY A LAST DITCH bid to prevent Moodshed, police drafted and signed a letter reinstating dismissed Senior Insp. Rolando Mendoza to his old job as part of "a strategy" to make him surrender during the Rizal Park hostage crisis, an official revealed at a hearing yesterday.

Mendoza apparently never got the letter and as the negotiations with him broke down, gunfire erupted and eight Hong Kong tourists ended up dead in their hijacked tourist bus.

Interior Undersecretary Rico E. Puno revealed the various options considered or taken by the government in its efforts to peacefully end the hostage ordeal, during yesterday's hearing by a fact-finding committee chaired by Justice Secretary Leila de Lima.

Puno's account of his role in the drama suggested the "reinstatement" of Mendoza was merely a ploy to make him give up.

Puno also said that at one point in the tension-packed drama, Mr. Aquino told him and Executive Secre-

REINSTATEMENT! A6

Too late the heroes: Crack police unit struts stuff

By Mike Navales

EVERY PIECE of equipment that police commandos needed—from gas masks to armored personnel carriers to bulletproof vests—were on hand at a "critical incident management exercise" staged by the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) yesterday.

The question then comes to mind: Where was all this that bloody Monday when a police special unit was exposed as woefully ill-trained and ill-equipped to deal with a disgruntled police officer who killed eight Hong Kong tourists after hostaging them for more than 11 hours?

In the wake of the Aug. 23 hostage crisis, highlighted by a bun-

TOO LATE! A6

SHINY AND NEW Members of a police special forces group show their assault rifles.

P8B more for poorest of poor

By Christine V. Esguerra

THE POOREST of poor Filipinos will enjoy an additional P8 billion in cash subsidies from the government, but this will only be made possible at the expense of the country's rice farmers whose livelihood depends on selling what they produce to the National Food Authority.

Malacañang has scrapped P8 billion for the NFA in the proposed P1.645-trillion national budget for next year and intends to give the amount to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), according to a briefing paper that Budget Secretary Florencio Abad presented to President Aquino and the rest of the Cabinet.

"We removed the P8-billion subsidy for rice procurement [for the] NFA and are proposing that this be used by the (DSWD) for rice subsidies to the poor," Abad said in the document, a copy of which was obtained by

P8B MORE! A15

US carrier arriving in Manila today

By Jerry E. Esplanada

WHILE HONG KONG tourists are avoiding Manila fearful of falling victim to another hostage-taking similar to the Aug. 23 incident at Luneta, the 7,000-plus sailors of the USS George Washington carrier group are apparently unperturbed.

The nuclear-powered American carrier and its warships-escorts are scheduled to drop anchor at Manila Bay this morning for a four-day goodwill visit.

In a statement, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) yesterday said the Philippine

US CARRIER A9

Hawking: God not needed for creation

LONDON—God did not create the universe and the "Big Bang" was an inevitable consequence of the laws of physics, the eminent British theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking argues in a new book.

In "The Grand Design," coauthored with US physicist Leonard Mlodinow, Hawking says a new series of theories made a creator of the universe redundant, according to the Times newspaper which published extracts on Thursday.

"Because there is a law such as gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing. Spontaneous creation is the reason there is something rather than nothing, why the universe exists, why we exist," Hawking writes. "It is not necessary to invoke God to light the blue touch paper and set the universe going."

Hawking, 68, who won global recognition with his 1988 book, "A Brief History of

HAWKING! A8

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: sunny and Weather. Ocean: off-and-on showers and rain. The rest of the country will have mostly sunny skies with cool and warm conditions.

Second FRONTPAGE

28 27 11 11 16 24
4D LUCKY 9
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Pag-Ibig cancels deal with firm

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig Fund) had canceled its millionth servicing agreement (USA) with Globe Asiatique Realty Holdings Corp. for the latter's Xevera housing projects in Pampanga two weeks before an Inquirer special report disclosed possible irregularities in the projects.

Delfin Lee, president of Globe Asiatique, confirmed the cancellation of the agreement on Aug. 16.

"The cancellation was all for the better because (now we won't have) homebuyers (collecting) (unsatisfactory)," Lee told the Inquirer in a text message.

Pag-Ibig Fund officials in Pampanga said Mabalat City have yet to issue an official statement on why the CSA was scrapped. Personnel in the Pag-Ibig Pampanga branch had referred housing loan borrowers to pay directly to its Malaybalay office in the City of San Fernando.

Two separate sources in the national savings and housing agency said the CSA was cancelled because Globe Asiatique had failed to remit housing loan contributions for three months. Its monthly remittance usually amounted to ₱15 million.

Globe Asiatique had also stopped taking out loan proceeds during these three weeks, the sources said.

Lee reiterated that the Pag-Ibig Fund had been the company's main client.

Documents obtained for the Inquirer report showed that Globe Asiatique took out almost ₱7 billion in housing loans on behalf of nearly 9,000 borrowers in Xevera Baesler and Xevera Mabalacat in Pampanga from March 2008 to May 2010.

Then Vice President Noli de Castro chaired the board of directors of Pag-Ibig Fund. (See sidebar.)

Lee said his company "does not enjoy favoritism from the government, but we plant housing projects, draw, not save Pag-Ibig Fund a single centavo, and it (the one which stood) to lose money and not the government if the allegation (that there are phony loan users) is true."

He denied receiving "special privileges," from government, saying he is a one-of-a-kind taxpayer "prior to delivering affordable but quality housing projects catering to (eligible) individuals."

In the Senate reports, Pag-Ibig Fund documents showed that Globe Asiatique paid a number of people and made them sign members' forms and accredited affidavits (because).

It also recruited people (eligible to borrow Pag-Ibig members) and took out the loan proceeds although the units were not completed and had material deficiencies.

Several borrowers could not be found while many units remained unoccupied.

The Pag-Ibig Fund, on the other hand, had many sales, allowing (other) membership that it stopped in July this year, triggering a cooling-off (period).

Lee said in a statement that his company "does not approve housing loan (but) only processes applications of those satisfying (what) units in their projects be approved with examined government agencies."

Noli says he ordered probe of realty firm's Pag-Ibig deals

By Jerome Aning

FORMER VICE PRESIDENT Noli de Castro yesterday disclosed that he was aware of possible irregularities regarding realty firm Globe Asiatique's loan arrangements with the government in March this year and had ordered an investigation.

"Last March, I got such information from our stakeholders about this and I called the Pag-Ibig management to investigate, (which they did. I told them to do so) after they had to do based on our priorities," De Castro said in an interview over Radyo Inquirer 990.

De Castro was at the time chair of the board of trustees of the Home Development Mutual Fund, or Pag-Ibig, by virtue of his being the chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC).

Vice President Jejomar Binay is now the HUDCC chair and also Pag-Ibig Fund chair.

De Castro said that he was not able to follow through on the investigation because the election campaign had started. He said he did not get the final report for the investigation before he stepped down from office on June 30.

He said Jaime Fabiana, Pag-Ibig's chief executive officer, would be in a position to reveal the findings of the investigation.

"The found units and (exchange of day-to-day operations, the approved policies, but and the developers help mark other issues. They are our stakeholders. If there are problems, we investigate first," he said.

However, he said the Pag-Ibig board approved the Globe Asiatique project.

"We saw the papers and we approved it," he said, adding that (Globe Asiatique's projects) were supposed to (answer to) serve (which the) needs of the public. Any (with) or the Home Development Mutual Fund Law of 2009, which, among others, included overseas Filipino workers and the self-employed in the Pag-Ibig fund.

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Palace: Order capping GOCC pay in the works

By Marvin Barcelona

AQUINO

THE DEPARTMENT of Budget and Management (DBM) is drafting an executive order that would put a cap on the huge salaries and bonuses of executives of government-owned and -controlled corporations, President Aquino said yesterday.

President Aquino made the remarks after the Senate came up with a resolution asking him to issue an executive order suspending the payment of the exorbitant salaries of the executives and rank-and-file employees of GOCCs.

Mr. Aquino said there is actually an executive order issued by former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo that controls the compensation and benefits of those who work for GOCCs despite their exemption from the Salary Standardization Law.

"There's already an existing law. It's an executive order, order of 2001 that was not implemented," President Aquino said.

"I am awaiting a draft coming from the DBM on how to update up that existing executive order precisely to prevent the excessive pay/benefit package that some of the GOCCs have been basking in for quite a long time," he added.

Mr. Aquino was referring to Memorandum Order No. 20 that Arroyo issued in June 2001. The order provides that salaries of executives of GOCCs and government financial institutions should not be more than twice the regular pay in government.

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"Of course there are cases sometimes from those who have gotten all of these for past harvest will issue that they've promises due the government and then 'non' we're no also (for government) and the people," President Aquino said.

Hopefully by next week that will become part of the law of the land," he added.

Mr. Aquino indicated that the government is now studying ways to implement the order (aimed) ... bring the perks in GOCCs.

"You have to do an inventory of all the GOCCs, all the various perks that they are getting, the bonuses, etc., the legalities of how they manage to afford themselves all of these, and come up with an all-encompassing EO (that will) rationalize, metering put a cap, and a limit to what should be the pay packages for these government executives," President Aquino said.

Sept. 10 a holiday

PRESIDENT AQUINO has declared (SAT) the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, is now-working holiday. It falls on Sept. 10.

Mr. Aquino's Proclamation No. 26 said it was necessary to declare Sept. 10 a regular holiday "in order to bring the religious and cultural significance of the (Eid) Fitr to the (us) of national consciousness."

The holiday, the proclamation said, was also "to promote cultural understanding and integration." It said the entire Filipino nation "should have the full opportunity to join (the) Muslim brothers and sisters in the observance and celebration of Eid'l Fitr.

Malacañang has said that the peace process (with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front would start after the end of Ramadan.

Marvin Barcelona

Finally, Etta takes CHR helm

By Leila B. Salaverria

FORMER AKBAYAN Rep. Loretta Rosales yesterday formally assumed the chairmanship of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), saying that she has big shoes to fill and telling her detractors not to be afraid of her.

Rosales, whose formal appointment came weeks after the President announced she was his choice for the CHR, said she would continue giving priority to protecting human rights against police brutality and the summary killings by state agents.

She said she also intends to focus on beefing up the agency's mandate through an amended charter and a better budget, including reforms within the commission and enforcing the antitorture law and other international humanitarian laws.

She disclosed that she received her appointment papers earlier this week and subsequently took her oath before Chief Justice Renato Corona.

Rosales' appointment to the CHR did not sit well with militant groups who belong to a rival faction in the leftist movement.

'Nothing to fear'

These groups have castigated her for, among others, supposedly linking legal progressive groups to the communist movement, and for saying that the killings of activists were part of an internal purge among communists.

But she said that her critics have nothing to fear from her, since she intends to treat them with equality, in the same manner that she treats everybody else.

"All they have to do is come to me. They should not fear me, they should not suspect me. They should look at me as officially I'm now the chair," she said in a press briefing.

But she also said she intends to address the human rights concerns of all groups, militants and state agents alike.

"There is universality of human rights," she said.

Rosales, a victim of abduction-slaying courtesy of the military, has had led the fight for compensation for martial law victims. She had also headed the House committee on human rights.

Welcomed

Rosales was welcomed by all four CHR commissioners at the turnover ceremonies at the Important Suites in Quezon City yesterday.

In her speech during the event, Rosales acknowledged that following in the footsteps her predecessor was a tall order. She noted that former CHR chief Leila de Lima, who is now Secretary of Justice, showed the agency the importance of integrity, independence and courage in preserving human rights. But she also said the CHR personnel's support was important.

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Ex-UP exec cries harassment by Ombudsman

By Leila B. Salaverria

ASKED WHETHER FROSTE and former University of the Philippines official Cristina Patricia Hidalgo has protested what they said was her harassment by the Office of the Ombudsman, which she said continues to pursue her for a case in connection with her use of a service vehicle four years ago.

In a letter, Hidalgo lamented that the Office of the Ombudsman has been asking her to submit documents in connection with the complaint filed against her and her driver for using her service vehicle on a Sunday, when, she said, she was working in state funds for UP.

Hidalgo said she could not fathom why the Ombudsman appears to be determined to believe that she and another UP official and driver were lying about their whereabouts.

"Had not aggrieved. Given the countless cases of blatant graft and corruption, involving billions of pesos, rules it seems to be resolutely ignored, why am I being singled out for this harassment by the Office of the Ombudsman?" she said in her letter, which has since circulated in the email networking site Facebook.

But Ombudsman Ombudsman Ann de Leon said the Office was not out to harass Hidalgo. Dr. Jesus explained that she was being asked to submit documents so that she could set her side to the complaint filed against her by its field investigation office for the use of the service vehicle.

This was in connection with the discovery that her government service vehicle was allegedly seen parked outside a nightclub past on a Sunday in 2006.

The fact that the Office of the Ombudsman is concerned with Hidalgo she could note that the case filed against her is moving in that it could be soon resolved. he said. He added that her case, which is undergoing preliminary investigation, is expected to be decided on this month.

Hidalgo, in her letter, said that on that day in June 2006, she and another UP official actually had a lunch meeting with UP alumni at the Dolores restaurant on Scout Mendiz Street.

Three months later, UP issued a memorandum on "Taxi Service Option Fuel Plate asking for late trip tickets and other documents pertaining to her service vehicle, and it also contained what she said were "ominous threats" that failing to follow the directive would result in criminal and/or administrative charges, although the charges were not specified.

UP complied with the directive, and for nearly four years, nothing more was heard about the matter.

But in July, Hidalgo said UP received an order from Medeiros. Dr. Jesus, Ombudsman Deputy General and Administrative Adjudication Bureau, and she learned that she and her driver were being investigated for graft, dishonesty, grave misconduct and conduct prejudicial to the interest of the service for the supposed misuse of the misappropriation of fuel and for causing undue injury to the state.

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Arraignment of hostage-taker's brother reset

By DJ Yap

A MAKATI court has postponed the arraignment of the brother of slain hostage-taker Rolando Mendoza to give him time to hire the services of a lawyer.

Judge Ernie Ernest Louie Miguel of the Manila Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 11 granted an oral motion by SPO2 Gregorio Mendoza's lawyer to defer the arraignment, a process in which an accused person enters a plea, and set said arraignment on Sept. 28.

Gregorio, represented by the Public Attorney's Office, indicated to the court his intention to file a motion to quash the information on the ground that the charges against him were defective.

He was charged with serious slight physical injuries and grave coercion for carrying the assist of the slain, 25 hostages carrying a firearm, which was later confiscated from him. The deputy sheriff, Senior Insp. Ramon Lito Bautista, said Gregorio told his brother not to listen to the negotiators unless his guns were returned to him.

His presence and subsequent arrest at the height of negotiations with his brother incensed Rolando, who fired at those suggested Mendoza into shooting the hostages. Eight of the Hong Kong tourists and Mendoza died in the bloody incident.

TO ALL UNIWDE GROUP OF COMPANIES
UNSECURED CREDITORS

UNIWIDE GROUP OF COMPANIES

By:

ATTY. ROLLY ILAGAN
Authorized Signatory

P1M FOR MARIKINA WATERSHED
Officials of Accenture, one of the leading BPO companies in the country, hand over a P1-million donation to the Philippine Disaster Recovery Foundation to PDRF chairman Manuel V. Pangilinan in Makati City. The donation is made to help PDRF's efforts in funding reforestation projects for the Marikina Watershed which was devastated by Typhoon "Ondoy." Ian Cruz, Accenture Philippines country chairman, and Accenture corporate citizenship officer Emerson Enriquez, Accenture corporate citizenship lead Marilee Sia, Accenture country managing director Lito Tayag, Pangilinan, PDRF executive director Butch Meily, Smart Communications and PLDT public affairs head Ramon R. Isberto, and Smart Communications corporate public affairs manager Dennis Rivera.

Now a storm, 'Henry' spawns more rain

By Kristine L. Alave

TROPICAL STORM "Henry" has moved closer to northern Philippines, enhancing the southwest monsoon that would pour more rain on the days, the weather bureau said yesterday.

Henry, which has maximum winds of 65 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 80 kph, is the eighth for this year, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said in its 5 p.m. bulletin.

It was sighted 860 kilometers east of Batanes and was moving west northwest toward the southern Japanese islands at the speed of 15 kph.

Although the tropical storm has entered the country's area of responsibility, Pagasa said it was still too far to warrant raising public storm warnings.

However, the weather bureau said some and cloudy skies will prevail over Luzon and Western Visayas over the next few days as Henry will strengthen the southwest monsoon that has been bringing rains to the regions.

Pagasa said residents of Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon should expect rains today, but the rains should ease by Sunday, to be replaced by cloudy skies and scattered rainshowers, Pagasa said.

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Seminar Topics & Schedules

Date	Topic	Time
September 15, 2010	"Ink and Printing"	1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.
	"Coating: The Silver Bullet"	2:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.
	"Original Equipment Manufacturer Parts"	4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.
	"Preparing Digital art Your Drawings"	5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m.
September 16, 2010	"Ink Technologies to Cover Image Problems"	8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
	"Managing Your Printing Business in Today's Environmental Issues"	11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
	"Corrosion Links: The Innovation in Color Management"	1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.
	"Latest Advancements in Sandblasting"	2:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.
	"Printed Circuit Production Workflow"	4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
	"Introduction of Environmental Friendly Process"	5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m.
September 17, 2010	"Labeling & Packaging Explosion"	8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
	"Advanced Technology in Color Management"	11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
	"Value Added Printing Products"	1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.
	"Maximizing Your Profits in Digital Printing"	2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.
	"Global Standards of Digital Press Ink"	4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.
	"Press Maintenance: The Heidelberg Way"	5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m.
September 18, 2010	"Ink Technology"	11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
	"Inkjet Ink Chemistry & Role of Humectant"	1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.
	"Personal Paperless Document Manager" (PDM)	2:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

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Correction

IN THE SEPT. 3 ISSUE, a story on Page A4—"Dengue cases hit record high; more deaths feared"—misstated the name of the head of the National Epidemiology Center. His name is Dr. Enrique Tayag.

Reader may send their regrets for correction of factual errors in writing to the ombudsman, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PSE Building, Ayala Avenue cor. Makati Avenue, Makati City, fax (632) 8924-2020, or email ombudsman@inquirer.com.ph.

Corrections may be made at the bottom of articles when an objectionable error is published, e-mail author, published in inquirer.net, call 896-6000, fax 896-2020, or write the Publisher, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5 INTI-AMBA Level 000.

THE DAILY GOSPEL
Saturday, September 4, 2010
22nd Week in Ordinary Time
Liturgical Color: Green
Gospel: Luke 6:1-5

Don't forget HK Pinoys, gov't asked

By Jerome Aning

A HONG KONG-BASED economist urges ruling dominant administration officials to tell the government to take seriously reports of intimidation and mistreatment of Filipino workers in the Chinese territory stemming from the Aug. 23 bloody hostage crisis.

While panic and paranoia dominated the weekend, breaking with reported mass exodus since the detainment of OFWs will not also help but instead will create the finishing line unless we acceptable collateral damage" of the tragedy" said Cynthia Arsiga Rallet, director of the Asian Forum for Migrant Workers (AFMW), in a statement.

"They (the Philippine government) complacency already contributed to the tragedy. They should not repeat the same mistake and just wait until the problem gets out," she said.

The AFMW deplored the "false reassurance" of Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) secretary general Ernesto Herrera.

Herrera reportedly said that the reports of harassment is being blown out of proportion and that as long as the services of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), especially domestic helpers, were needed by employers, Filipinos will have jobs and Hong Kong.

"For a supposed labor leader, such a statement could be construed as spouting for even the few workers who lost their jobs or employers of harassment. We strongly advise the former senator and his group the TUCP to look out the reality of the Filipino domestic workers before issuing false assurances that appear to say that it is all right for OFWs to receive such treatment. Workers think job security is not to easily threatened," Rallet said.

Rallet reasoned that the government has to reinforce its "crisis under the rug" reports of adverse impacts of the hostage-taking tragedy on the OFWs in Hong Kong who already have been nursing the brunt of Hong Kong people's anger over the Manila hostage tragedy.

"Even one single repatriation should be a concern of the Philippine government for it means the livelihood of a family and it will affect them. If the government is really sincere in its promise of protection and services to overseas Filipino workers," said Rallet.

The AFMW, founded in 1951, is based at the St. John's Cathedral in Hong Kong's Central District.

Rallet said the AFMW has received reports of OFWs complaining of sentiments being transmitted or changes in the way they were being treated because of the drama and anger that Hong Kong employers felt over the Philippine hostage crisis in Manila in which eight Hong Kong residents were killed by a disturned policeman.

Aside from sex job termination, the AFMW has also received reports of threats and verbal abuse heaped on a number of OFWs, Rallet said.

There were even no case of will-spite tension being spat on in a bus and there, who were verbally abused in a Hong Kong restaurant, she said.

Verzosa opts for early retirement, will step down Sept. 14

By Alcuin Papa

DESPITE THE ongoing probe of the botched police rescue in the Rizal Park hostage-taking incident, Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Director General Jesus Verzosa said he would still push on with his retirement.

Sr. Supt. Agrimero Cruz, PNP spokesperson, confirmed Verzosa would hang up his uniform on Sept. 14, or a little more than three months before he is supposed to retire on Dec. 25.

Cruz said the early retirement of Verzosa has been approved by President Aquino.

"I don't think he will be leaving with a cloud of doubt or uncertainty in relation to the incident. He said he would still help with the probe and aside the ongoing programs of the PNP anytime he is called, he is willing to answer that call," Cruz said.

He added: "The initial findings of the probe will take a few weeks, that even if it takes years, he is willing to help in the probe and carrying out the development of the procedures and systems in the PNP."

He also said that despite the circumstances surrounding the early retirement of Verzosa, "we are confident the PNP will stay solid. Any adjustments that need to be done in terms of the programs of the PNP will be carried out."

The early retirement of Verzosa, Cruz explained, was part of the plan by his classmates at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class of 1976 to retire early. "They (Class of 1976) want to give way to younger officers to take over and implement our integrated transformation program." Verzosa is the last of the PMA Class of 1976 in the PNP.

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We find ways

Gov't group studies cash assistance to HK victims

By Leila B. Salaverria

A GROUP designated by President Aquino to find the possibility of giving cash assistance to the victims of the Rizal Park hostage tragedy is expected to submit its recommendation this weekend, according to Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman.

Soliman, who is part of the team, said consideration had been going on even before Hong Kong lawmakers passed on Thursday a resolution demanding that the Philippine government pay compensation to the families of the eight Hong Kong tourists killed in the drama.

"We want a thorough study on what is the most appropriate way to express our sympathy," she said via phone interview.

Others involved in studying the possibility of cash assistance are Budget Secretary Florencio Abad, the Presidential Legal Adviser Edwin Lacierda and undersecretary Manuel Mamba.

Question of timing

They have been consulting with the Department of Foreign Affairs and other experts, Soliman said.

"I don't think the issue here is compassionate, alone," Budget Secretary Florencio Abad told reporters. "What is important is to be able to show solidarity. We understand what happened. We are sympathetic to them."

Abad would not give an amount or timetable for giving compensation, but added that the group handling the matter was in constant touch with the governments in Hong Kong and China.

"It is a question of timing. What is important is we are prepared, we have options," Abad said. With a report from AFP

Bus hostage-taking deemed 'local crisis' by authorities

From page A1

ous hour, Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo, who had said he was left "out of the loop" in the efforts to resolve the crisis because Duterte was earlier designated by Mr. Aquino to handle police affairs.

Mr. Hong Kong police officers observed the hearing that began at 9:40 a.m. and continued until past 7 p.m., with Lim telling the militants mixed.

PNP Director General Jesus Verzosa and Chief Supt. Rodolfo Magtibay also testified separately for over two hours.

Verzosa admitted that he could have mobilized more forces or commandos to the police if he were on duty since during earliest moments in the negotiation.

He said he flew to Capiznon de Oro City on that day to attend an "official function" despite being told four hours earlier that a distressed policeman was holding captive a busload of Hong Kong tourists.

'It happened in Manila'

Point made his admission while being questioned by DK members Hermenio Benitez, Barbers president of the Regionen ng mga Bookkeeper ng Pilipinas, and Rose Libanan, governor of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines.

Libanan asked Duterte: "Did it not occur to you that the issue of national crisis is the fact that it happened in Manila? Did it not occur to you to assert that the crisis be considered a national crisis that would give jurisdiction to the national crime committee?"

Said Perez: "We, sir ... [Duterte] happened in Manila, that's true. The hostage taker was assigned in Manila, and that's one thing in consideration there. It happened in the jurisdiction of the city of Manila, and the hostages taker was a former police officer."

The question over jurisdiction of Parochialism primarily on how the national government had handled the hostage-taking that embarrassed the Philippines before the world, and to deter other who may be angry as the result of the dismissal from service.

Point said the local crisis committee was constantly in charge but that the national crisis committee, which he headed, was on "standby" in case the situation worsened.

"There is no way we can use the element of having a nationals being held hostage by a police officer?" Libanan asked Point.

He replied: "It was very significant, but again I reiterate that as I the local crisis committee, I'm focused to resolution, the hostage took place in Manila and the hostage-taker, a former Manila policeman, was very cooperative."

"It we point in time from 10 in the morning to 7 in the evening did it ever occur to you to consider the crisis within the dimension of the national crisis committee?" Libanan said.

"No, sir," Point said.

Earlier, Barbers asked Point if the hostage-taking were considered simply an "ordinary crisis."

Point described the incident as "a local hostage-taking situation" that could be handled by the police district director and the city mayor.

"Do you not heeded if in local crisis. Did it not occur to you sounds that if now is PNP affected taking hostage some ... foreign nationals and there were indications that it would have [an impact on] the country and everybody?" Barbers said.

Point said the committee granted Duterte's request to explain limited closed doors after the incident was deemed a "local crisis" only. Verzosa joined the executive session.

'Cooperative' hostage-taker

Libanan pressed on: "So, the primary consideration in the determination of level or response is the identity of the perpetrator? You did not consider the identity of the potential victim? Did it occur to you which could change the magnitude of and the potential governmental responses to the crisis situation?"

Said Point: "We did not consider that, but the national crisis committee was on standby and we were prepared to take over in case it was elevated to a national crisis. But it was the local crisis committee's call, and [the] assessment of the hostage-taker was that he was very cooperative."

He added that the foreign affairs, social welfare and development, tourism, justice, and health departments had been given "instructions" on what to do in case the situation came to be classified as a national crisis.

Even De Lima was baffled by the assessment that the situation was a local crisis.

"The mindset was that was a local incident. Was there any dissenting opinion by anyone, whether by members of the local crisis committee or the second-in-command in the which was a conflict?" she said.

"Our assessment was that he was a very cooperative hostage-taker, releasing eight or nine hostages each day," Point said.

Incapable, inexperienced

Point admitted that he was not trained to handle hostage situations. But he took responsibility for the bungled rescue operation.

"I am not capable of handling hostage situations. I am not trained to do that. I do not have the experience to handle hostage negotiations," Point said.

He agreed with De Lima when she wondered whether Duterte was on standby and to negotiators to do their own thing."

Point, a former shooting buddy of the President, said the latter supported him interior undocumentary but passed on to Duterte the P5 million reward. Republic Act 6975, the Department of the Interior and Local Government, Police Service Act of 1990, and the Philippine National Police Reform and Reorganization Act of 1998.

De Lima asked Point if it was confirmed that there was "such a order from the President for you will like care or handle the PNP."

"Especially on the investments and logistical requirements, and to shall to confirm reports that would be helping in the operations," he said.

He added that his role was to observe and give support to the police in terms of logistics and manpower.

4 deaths

Libanan questioned Magtibay, the ground commander, on the possible deaths of four of the Hong Kong tourists even the police herself.

"Is it true Magtibay that heard on the numbers of wounds," Even of the Hong Kong tourists even the police herself.

"Should you consider that [casualty] as successful if you died on the hostage-taker?" Libanan said.

Magtibay said he could not conclude police' statement, but said that if they were the case, "[the] INDP team, I believe, cannot draw the Libanan shoot for that."

"They said their best and in fact we awarded a result remains whereby all the hostages, including the hostage-taker, will die during the assault," he said.

Libanan said the testimony that four of the tourists may have perished during the assault "was stated" during the committee's executive session with Point and Verzosa.

"I may not have the privilege to discuss in detail how it happened, but in the course of the executive session, it appeared that the four may have suffered the tragedy in the course of the assault," Libanan said.

Point was previously a consultant at Mr. Aquino's office in the Senate and one of the managers of the Aquino-Pardo's campaign.

Public trust

"In taking responsibility the President is emphasizing the principle of accountability as enshrined in the Constitution—public office is a public trust," Colonia said yesterday in his message to reporters.

Mr. Aquino indicated to reporters yesterday he was personally looking into the tragic incident.

"I went to Baguio in Camp Shaping Dive the other day and that was in an effort to remind myself that I would be a matter of a different discussion on," Libanan said.

Point member Pedro Aquino Are also asked Magtibay if he abandoned his post during the crucial hours, ...when a radio report was speaking with Mendoza by phone and was "clapping up the line"—he asked a meeting on the command center at the Emerald Restaurant on Roxas Boulevard.

Magtibay said he did not abandon his post.

He said he had followed Lim's instructions for him to proceed to the restaurant "to coordinate our discussion" with Point and Chief Supt. Leocadio Santiago, the chief of the National Capital Region Police Office.

PNP chief's absence

Verzosa was questioned by the committee on his absence and his decision to let Manila Police District (MPD) officials handle the situation.

De Lima asked Verzosa if he kind the same impression of the circumstances after the hostage-taker expressed disgust over the chief negotiator, Supt. Orlando Mora.

"When it is eminently necessary," Verzosa said. "We don't want to interfere in the connection of the ground."

De Lima sought Verzosa's assessment of Magtibay's decision to arrest Mendoza's brother, SPO2 Gregorio Mendoza Jr. of, hopefully wounding with the hostage-taker.

The arrest, which was aired live on TV, enraged Mendoza and pushed him to open fire on the hostages.

"I was stunned by the sudden commotion and felt nervous and anxious, so I ordered that I will believe it was the most critical and tipping point," Verzosa said.

He said he had thought of calling Magtibay to relay in situation on how to handle the negotiations, but decided not to.

"If you were physically present, would you have done that?" Immediately ordered Magtibay to desist from arresting the brother?" De Lima said.

Verzosa replied: "I can [under] that decision. But it has already happened, and it might be hard to repeat the observations of the public."

Crowd control

Verzosa said the police failed to control the crowd during the hostage crisis.

He said crowd control involved keeping away not only lookers but also the media, the police director's personnel, who should not be at the site of a hostage-taking.

"There was a mix-up." Verzosa said under questioning by Barbers. "The layers happened because of the failure to [implement] crowd control. It was some lapses ... I think we failed to designate a media center, where media briefings should have been given."

Like Point, Verzosa said he was confident that Magtibay could handle the crisis. He is presumed said to the hostage-taker because Mendoza was cooperative with the police during the early hours.

"There were two considerations in having the MPD address—[Metropolitan Police from the MPD and Magtibay said they can possibly settle with the hostage-taker because he was cooperative," the PNP chief said.

Verzosa said the release of some of the hostages so the first negotiation right after the arrest, added that the negotiation "going smoothly."

"In various stages, [the negotiation] was proceeding very well," he said, adding that he was continuously talking with Magtibay on the hostage-taker.

Verzosa said Mendoza's disposition suddenly changed when he saw the letter from the Office of the Ombudsman stating that it would review his dismissal from the PNP.

"That was the tipping point. His characters just changed," Even then on," Verzosa said.

PNP DIRECTOR General Jesus Verzosa (left) talks to Hong Kong Police Supt. Wan Tai-Ming (second from left). Police director Supt. Wong of the Chinese Embassy (back to camera), and Hong Kong Police Chief Insp. Wan Sin-Hong (right), before the start of the formal investigation of the event that hijacking incident at the Department of Justice in Manila on Friday.

HK police study bullets test-fired from hostage-taker's guns

HONG KONG—Police in this Chinese territory will study bullets test-fired from a gun used by a Manila hostage-taker in an Aug. 23 incident that left eight Hong Kong tourists dead, reports said yesterday.

On Thursday, two police officers brought back to Hong Kong spent bullets after weeklong trip dispatched to stop Police Ricardo Rubio's weapon, an M-16 assault rifle and .45-cal. pistol.

Police declined to say who the bullets and casings had been handed back to Hong Kong or to whom they are to.

"[We] are now actively investigating the case. Since the police will prepare and submit a draft report to the warrant, it is not appropriate for the police to make any public confirmation about the investigation before the report is ready," they said in a statement.

The two police officers were held at the Manila airport on earlier Thursday on double cover whether they had clearance to take the bullets and casings out of the country.

"Mr. Li Kwok-wah, chief inspector from Hong Kong, immediately exchanged views with Mr. Sen

Chavez settles with Ayala village association

FORMER Solicitor General Frank Chavez and the Ayala Alabang Village Association have reached an amicable settlement, agreeing to withdraw charges and counter charges arising from the construction of a retaining wall in the back of the lawyer's house.

Regional trial court Judge Jeanie Gonzales of Muntinlupa approved the settlement, which became the basis for the dismissal of the estafa case filed by Chavez against the association's officers. The judge, in her order on Aug. 12, also declared that the word "land grabber" hurled against Chavez was "misplaced and unjustified for."

The case stemmed from the construction in 1996 of a retaining wall to prevent soil erosion in the back of Chavez' property during the construction of his mansion on Jintanglad Street. He was issued a certificate of occupancy with completion of the construction in 1997, but the association refused to return his construction bond.

In 2007, 10 years after he moved into his new house, Chavez retrieved his request for the return of his construction bond but the association, under a new set of officers, accused him of violating the deed of restriction with the construction of the wall. The association filed last year a case against him before the Fiscal and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB).

In return, Chavez filed similar cases against the association's governors for violations of the deed of restriction in their respective capacities as well as the Department of Justice. Judge Guerrero conducted a series of mediation conferences.

Eventually, the parties came to terms, withdrawing all charges against each other before the HLURB, the Muntinlupa RTC and the Court of Appeals, and reaching a settlement agreement. Chavez also executed an affidavit of desistance which led the judge to dismiss the estafa case against the governors. The governors also returned Chavez' construction bond of P211,000 to him.

Church renews plea for Pakistan

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE CATHOLIC Church yesterday made fervent calls to the Filipinos to extend help to Pakistan, where 20 million survivors are coping with the worst ever flooding to hit the impoverished Islamic nation.

Manila Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Pabillo, Caritas Filipinas national director, said there was an urgent need to give relief. Food stricken residents prompt assistance to save more lives and to avert an impending health crisis.

He encouraged Filipinos to lend a hand, saying that they were no strangers to "heavy breaking hours" brought about by several calamities.

"Finally, a year has passed whereas, we, suffered basic social/economic needs of Typhoon 'Ngeneng' and 'Ondoy,'" said Pabillo in a letter sent two weeks ago to social action centers across the country.

"We were left with an aftermath of devastation, sense and shattered spirits and it was through the compassion and solidarity of people, both here and abroad, that the tradition were able to pull through," he stressed.

Pabillo was referring to the back-to-back storms that hit the country late last year, leaving hundreds of people dead and villages submerged in floodwaters.

In asking for donations for flood-stricken Pakistan, Pabillo also said on Thursday over Radio Veritas that the Caritas Filipinas was already mobilizing aid from charitable institutions to fulfill the immediate needs of the Pakistani population.

With Cal of Caritas Pakistan has also made an appeal for help over the Church-run radio network on Thursday.

Hunger prompted Lim to leave bus-hostage scene

By Marlon Ramos

"DIRTY HARRY" was apparently no match for hunger pangs.

Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, who led the crisis management committee that handled the Aug. 23 hostage-taking, twice this day said he left Quirino Grandstand during the critical moments to dine at a nearby Chinese restaurant.

Testifying before the committee investigating the incident that exposed the Philippines to international ridicule, Lim said he decided to momentarily leave the scene thinking that the situation would drag on until the next day.

He said he even "invited" Chief Supt. Rodolfo Magtibay, the ground commander, to join him at Emerald Restaurant on Roxas Boulevard.

He made his departure despite knowing that the hostage-taker, dismissed senior Insp. Rolando Mendoza, had shot at the police negotiators.

HOT SEAT Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim on his way to the hearing at Department of Justice in Manila.

No lunch yet

"To tell you frankly, I was already hungry then. I hadn't taken any lunch. So I said it would be better if we eat at Emerald but since it would just be a waiting game," Lim said, eliciting chuckles from journalists covering the hearing.

When lawyer Boan Librojo, one of the five members of the committee, asked him why they left the area during a crucial point in the situation, Lim said he was not aware that the hostage-taker had begun shooting his hostages.

But the mayor admitted knowing that Mendoza had shot at the chief negotiator, Supt. Orlando Yebra Jr., upon order to show his frustration at the police's failure to order the Office of the Ombudsman to review its ruling dismissing him from the service.

Pressed to explain why he told Magtibay to follow him to the restaurant and leave his post at the command center, Lim said he did not direct the latter to do so.

"I did not order him; I just invited him to go to Emerald. If he said that he felt it was important for him to stay, I would not have prevented him," Lim said.

'Just wait'

Lim also admitted telling Magtibay to let patient and just wait Mendoza out.

"I said they should just wait for the hostage-taker to give up. Anyway, he would surely get hungry, sleepy and tired. Maybe he would just surrender the next day."

Lim said Magtibay did not ask him anymore when the latter decided to take the "last option" and assault the bus.

He said the crisis management committee merely acted as an advisory body, and that the critical incident management committee led by Magtibay was responsible for deciding whether or not to take the hostage-taker down.

Despite the flak that Magtibay and the Manila Police District have been getting for the botched rescue of the hostages, Lim said the policeman should be cited for their bravery in trying to solve the crisis peacefully, with all the hostages safe.

"They did their best. Unfortunately, their best was not enough," he said.

Misreading

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima, who chairs the investigating committee, said the crisis management committee might have "misorientated" and "misread" the situation.

Told Lim: "We admit there was a misappreciation of the facts by the ground commander Magtibay (tought) no outward incident would happen."

In reply to a question from De Lima if he knew the hostage-taker before the Aug. 23 incident, Lim said it was he who had ordered the then SPD director, Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales, to file administrative and criminal charges against Mendoza for supposedly forcing a chief to meet an espionage raider linked with illegal drugs and later extorting P200,000 from him.

He said he never had the chance to work with Mendoza during his 51-year career with the Manila police.

Asked if there was reason to charge Mendoza, the mayor said "Yes, your honor."

'Reinstatement' letter for Mendoza undelivered, says Puno

From page A1

tary Ricardo Gloria that he (the President) wanted to go to the hostage scene and then Mendoza to find out what the dismissed officer wanted, but the advisers opposed such a move.

Puno told the committee that giving in to the demand of Mendoza to be reinstated in the police force was an option the President left to Mr. Ricardo and Gebza at Malacañang a few hours into the hostage-taking.

Recounting the Palace meeting, Puno said: "I told him (Mr. Aquino) that if we want to reinstate him immediately, maybe in my capacity I can sign it. Baka magsermon kasi (We might be able to convince him)."

'It was a strategy'

De Lima asked Puno during the hearing if he had any legal basis to do so.

"No, ma'am. I have no legal basis to reinstate him ... It was a strategy we were planning," Puno answered. He said reinstatement orders would only have been issued by the Board of Police Commissioners or by the Office of the Ombudsman.

He said the Palace did not push through with the plan as it might encourage other disgruntled people to copy what Mendoza had done to force the government to give in to their demands.

"After reflection, we decided not to pursue that," Puno said.

Reinstatement order

Puno recounted that, reportedly, an apparent reinstatement order for Mendoza was drafted and signed by the head of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO), Chief Supt. Leocadio Santiago.

Puno said the negotiators were already about to log down by then.

He said he was at the tactical operations center of the Manila Police headquarters when he saw Santiago preparing a paper which appeared to be Mendoza's reinstatement.

It was around the time that Mendoza's brother, Emperio, also a policeman, was making a scene before the media after fellow officers disarmed him and took custody of him for allegedly grabbing Mendoza and to give up.

Too late

Puno said Santiago signed the paper in front of him.

"I asked him 'What's that?' He told me, 'Sir, papawirin ko na ito. Kung ano ang mangyari, dadalin ko na lang sa mga bata (I am going to withdraw this. Whatever happens we have to show something to him).'" Puno quoted Santiago as saying.

He said that Santiago spoke to Chief Supt. Rodolfo Magtibay, the ground commander, and Senior Supt. Orlando Yebra Jr., the chief negotiator, to tell them to inform Mendoza about his "reinstatement."

But Yebra could no longer reach Mendoza through the three phones he had been using in their previous conversations.

Tempted to go

Puno, the highest-ranking government official summoned by the committee, testified that he was at his office at the 19th floor of the DILG building on Edsa when Orbos's office called him at around 10:30 a.m. on Aug. 23 to tell that there was an ongoing hostage situation.

Puno, accompanied by Supt. Benoni Medina of the NCRPO, went to see Mr. Aquino at Malacañang at 12:45 p.m.

At around 2 p.m., Puno said, Mr. Aquino told him and Orbos that he had wanted to go to the scene, stressing that the country was already losing so much because of Mendoza's actions.

Puno quoted the President as saying in a mixture of English and Filipino: "Can you imagine having Inspector Mendoza to ask what he really wants. You know how much money we are losing because of him. This is embarrassing to us. I am already tempted to go down."

Puno said he left Malacañang at around 4 p.m., remarking to the President that it seemed that "everything was going well" and that the "general idea" was to rule out Mendoza.

Hanging by a thread

Except for the weather, all the external characteristics of the hostage-taking incident before Quirino Grandstand on Aug. 23 were reproduced. Hostages and media were at the scene, but were kept at bay by a civil disturbance police unit. A woman playing "stayer" barged into the command post, complete with aides.

Before lunchtime, one could not shake off the idea that it was all a performance, especially as the actors taking part in the demonstration were a little too overzealous in acting out their roles.

Everything by the book

Recounting officers did everything by the book. They placed a vacant plywood kiosk at the bank where the negotiator talked with the hostage-taker, and brought food to the suspects and the hostages.

Police forces only emerged close after one of the hostage-takers told the negotiator that he had shot one of the victims. Police carefully entered the bank through an emergency exit door as the same time that a "flashbang" charge was detonated at the front door.

Hostages appeared pleased by the troops' display of precision, although he seemed to be trying hard not to appear to be too satisfied with the performance.

"There is always room for improvement," he said of the strategies and tactics that the troops used in the exercise.

He said the evaluators would be able to determine "the capabilities of the troops and what procedures are needed to be reviewed."

"We also want to determine if there is a uniform doctrine being followed by all our personnel" when responding to crisis situations, he said.

"Because there has to be only one," Santiago said.

Too late the heroes: Crack police unit struts stuff

From page A1

glad exercise attempt, police officers were made to undergo a rigidity "reassessment and reorientation" course at the NCRPO headquarters at Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig.

Showcase exercise

Yesterday's crisis simulation was the culminating activity of the retraining exercise in which police officers from the special weapons and tactics (SWAT) units of the five Metro Manila police districts, the Special Action Force (SAF), Aviation Security Group, Maritime Group and the Regional Public Safety Battalion showcased their skills in responding to crisis situations.

"I cannot say yet whether they passed the assessment because their evaluators will be submitting their reports to me," said NCRPO Director Leocadio Santiago Jr.

Santiago headed the SAF, an elite police unit trained to deal with crisis situations like hostage taking before entering in the NCRPO.

He explained that this exercise was intended to identify the "weaknesses" in terms of skills, police personnel possessed or the leadership and know what kind of training the force still required.

All the participating units came in full battle gear, wearing flashbang vests and carry shotguns for their bodies. They brought in their equipment—sophisticated firearms, boost of ordnance and even bomb-scuffing dogs which can allegedly smell explosives and locate hidden devices.

President Aquino was invited to the simulation drill but police officials were told that he could not make it.

Pretend bank robbery

The activities simulated a bank robbery to test the skills of the police officers.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT Elite forces of the Philippine National Police perform a "hostage" during a simulation of a hostage situation in Taguig City on Friday. The exercise was done following the bus hostage-taking drama on Aug. 23 that killed eight Hong Kong tourists after a botched negotiation.

The police officers, all Israel Trained Counter-Terrorism Unit graduates, were developed into a hostage situation when responding police officers promptly arrived at the scene.

Soldiers in civilian clothes pretended to be customers inside the bank. Then, a group of heavily armed men, wearing bullet proof vests and bonnets, barged into the bank.

The police officers, who were also wearing bullet proof vests and bonnets, immediately responded to the situation.

Within seconds, the police officers were able to subdue the suspects and rescue the hostages.

The police officers also showcased their skills in rescuing hostages inside a moving bus.

Hawking: God not needed for creation

From page A1

Time," an account of the origins of the universe, it announced for his work on black holes, cosmology and quantum gravity.

Since 1979, the scientist has worked on marrying the two cornerstones of modern physics—Albert Einstein's General Theory of Relativity, which concerns gravity and large-scale phenomena, and quantum theory, which covers subatomic particles.

The big bang

His latest comments suggest he has broken away from previous views he has expressed on religion.

Previously, he wrote that the laws of physics meant it was simply not necessary to believe that God had intervened in the Big Bang.

In "A Brief History of Time," he wrote: "If we discover a complete theory, it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason—for then we should know the mind of God."

New book

In his latest book, he says the 1992 discovery of a planet orbiting another star other than the Sun helped document all the view of the future of physics, Isaac Newton, that the universe could not have arisen out of chaos but was created by God.

"That makes the outer domain of our planetary constituents—the single Sun, the lucky combination of fourteen distances and orbit rates, far less remarkable, and far less compelling evidence that the Earth was essentially designed just to please us human beings," he writes.

Leading scientific authority

Hawking, who is only able to speak through a computer-generated voice synthesizer, has uncommonly physiography that has prevailed over the years and left him almost completely paralyzed.

He began suffering from the disease in his early 20s but went on to establish himself as one of the world's leading scientific authorities, and has also been a genial opponent on "Star Trek" and "The cartoons "Futurama" and "The Simpsons."

Last year, he announced he was stepping down as Cambridge University's Lucasian Professor of Mathematics, a position once held by Newton and now Hawking had held since 1979.

"The Grand Design" is due to go on sale next week.

Reuters

EXPLAINING THE UNIVERSE British physicist Stephen Hawking, in this photo, says God wasn't necessary for the creation of the universe. In his new book, "The Grand Design," Hawking says creating a complete series of theories will explain the universe. The book, written with American physicist and author, Leonard Mlodinow, will be out next week.

US carrier group arriving in Manila today

From page A1

government had given "clearance" to the 10-ship carrier fleet to visit the country.

The DFA noted that during the ship's port call here in August 2009 "around $7 million (P332.5 million in today's exchange rates) were spent by the American sailors and included in hotel bookings, night outing, shopping and other activities."

"Some of the crew's family members also entered the country to meet up with their loved ones," said DFA spokesperson J. Eduardo Malaya.

According to Blakers, the George Washington "will dock near the SM Mall of Asia for command level visits, routine ship replenishment, maintenance of shipboard systems and crew liberty."

"Philippine Navy officers will welcome the fleet, which is made up of two ships—the USS George Washington, the cruiser USS Cowpens and destroyers USS John McCain and USS Campbell," he said.

The DFA stressed that the US fleet's visit is "reaffirmative of the vibrant bilateral ties between the Philippines and the United States and is expected to be a boon to local economy, particularly to the tourism sector."

Supercarrier

The US Embassy in Manila yesterday confirmed the arrival of the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, USS George Washington (CVN 73), and its escort warships this morning in Manila for a four-day goodwill visit.

The American carrier group's port call comes as "further evidence of the strong ties between the US and the Philippines," according to an embassy media advisory.

The 100,000-ton "supercarrier" will be "anchored out in Manila Bay and the only way to gain access to it is through a ferry service," it added.

During their visit, some of the George Washington's 5,000-plus crew and air wing members will take part in "community relations projects and professional exchanges between the US and Philippine navies."

The supercarrier made its first goodwill visit to the country on Aug. 11 to 15, 2009.

Violation of Constitution

Meanwhile, Kalinaw party-list Rep. Rosanna Fabiñez called the visit here of the USS George Washington as "another blatant disrespect of our Constitution."

"It's also an insult to the Sept. 16, 1991 Senate vote to reject US bases," Fabiñez added.

For militant teachers' party-list Rep. Antonio Tinio, the US aircraft carrier's visit here "should be seen as a test case of President Aquino's commitment to national sovereignty."

"The USS George Washington is nuclear-powered and capable of delivering nuclear weapons. Unless the government takes effective measures to ensure that no such weapons are onboard, such as through ship inspections, then its presence here violates Philippine sovereignty, particularly the constitutional provision on nuclear weapons within our territory," Tinio told the Senate.

No violation

However, the DFA yesterday said that the entry here of nuclear-powered foreign vessels "does not violate the Constitution."

Malaya clarified that "the Constitution prohibits the entry of nuclear weapons but not necessarily nuclear-powered foreign naval vessels."

$4.5-billion carrier

According to the official website of the USS George Washington (http://go.hr/uvyxnd) [sic], this is the fourth US navy vessel named after the first American president.

Built by the Virginia-based Newport News Shipbuilding Co. at a cost of $4.5 billion, the ship was commissioned on July 4, 1992, the website said.

The 1,092-foot vessel, whose four engines are powered by two nuclear reactors, has a top speed of over 30 knots. With a flight deck area of about 4.5 hectares, the ship can accommodate about 80 aircraft. Yokosuka, Japan, is the warship's home port.

The George Washington has been deployed to the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea on at least six times.

Korea, Vietnam

Sometime in early May, the supercarrier left Yokosuka naval base for six weeks. The ship and its escorts later made a port call to Busan, South Korea.

In response to the recent sinking of the South Korean navy vessel Cheonan, the George Washington took part in "Invincible Spirit," a joint military exercise with the Japanese and South Korean navies in the Sea of Japan.

Early this month, the carrier group sailed to Danang, Vietnam, and joined the fourth navy fleet from the country in the celebration of the 15th anniversary of the normalization of US-Vietnam diplomatic relations.

It was the first time an American aircraft carrier visited that country since the Vietnam War.

SUPER CARRIER. US servicemen walk on the upper deck of the USS George Washington aircraft carrier during a media visit at the South China Sea, 170 nautical miles from Manila on Friday. The US carrier will drop anchor on Manila Bay today for a four-day goodwill visit.

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ISSN 0115-2542 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Vol. 25 No. 250

OPINION

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Dengue alert

EARLY A year ago, in October 2009, Department of Health records indicated there were 5,212 cases of Influenza A(H1N1) infections in the Philippines, of which 30 people were confirmed to have died.

Back then, the fear and hysteria over the spread of the A(H1N1) virus was tremendous and palpable. As early as May 2009, the World Health Organization had raised a pandemic alert over the virus, with more than 40 countries announcing outbreaks of swine flu in their backyards from the time the disease was first detected in Mexico. A few months later, US President Barack Obama also declared the swine flu surge in his country a national emergency. The Philippines, for its part, geared for the worst by placing an order with the WHO for some P1.00 million worth of vaccines, instituting large-scale testing and monitoring of possible new infections, and intensifying a national campaign to encourage people to practice good respiratory hygiene and maintain clean surroundings to smash the spread of the virus.

Contrast all that buzz and activity with the relative absence now of blaring headlines or airwave chatter on the truly alarming spate of severe infections and deaths in the country arising from another scourge: dengue fever. The latest DOH reports say more than 42,500 Filipinos have been drowned by the lethal disease since January this year, up by a jolting 86 percent for the same period in 2009. Out of this number, at least 465 deaths have been tallied across the country.

That's 465 fatalities versus 30 for the swine flu outbreak. But where the relative lull of hyperactive community and government fear-mongering on the A(H1N1) cases was deafening, hardly anything of comparable impact has been heard so far regarding the dengue epidemic, despite its apparently more insidious and deadly record. This is not, of course, to diminish the deaths of Iranian beings in either case, but only to point out that the current dengue spasm ravaging the teeny parts of the country deserves an much higher-level scrutiny and forewarning as the earlier flu outbreak.

Such badly needed attention, unfortunately, has been the casualty of the country's bread-and-circuses state of mind in the past year or so. Filipinos have had a good serving of distractions lately, beginning with the election campaign fiesta, the unexpectedly swift raising and counting, the heady days of the presidential inauguration and the move to Malacañang by a new dispensation, all the way down to the nude swallowing over official thievery courtesy of government functionaries with executive perks, and, most recently, the global outrage triggered by an ex-cop's bloody hostage-taking of tourists—and the local police's bungled response to it.

With these convulsive events dominating the news cycle, the flight of the deadly dengue-carrying mosquito across the predominantly poorer parts of the country has been mostly overlooked, its gravity diminished by public indifference, until too late. Eastern Visayas, for instance, has logged a 31 percent increase in cases this year from 2009 figures, with confirmed deaths at 76. Other regions heavily afflicted by the disease include Western Visayas, Soccsksargen, Caraga and the urban poor communities of Metro Manila.

More than alarming, the figures are tragic, because dengue is, in fact, an easily preventable disease. The epidemic is not an inevitable part of this country being tropical, or even poor. The DOH's anti-dengue warnings consist of activities that require no herculean effort, among them searching for and destroying the breeding grounds of mosquitoes, such as swamps and standing water; preserving one's self by using mosquito nets, repellents and protective clothing; and seeking immediate medical treatment when flu-like signs and symptoms appear.

The continued spread of the disease makes it clear that the DOH needs to ramp up its awareness campaign, especially in communities with potentially greater risk of infection. The burgeoning number of cases, if left unchecked, will overburden the public health system and lead to more costly complications.

While the government remains preoccupied with the aftermath of the Quirino Grandstand tragedy, it needs to pay attention to the an less dangerous threat brought about by the Aedes aegypti mosquito on the lives and health of ordinary Filipinos. It has to bang the drum more loudly and urgently—or bungling here, please—because, quite simply, this is a matter of life and death.

EDITORIAL

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'Prolific mother of folly'

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

LOVE CREDIT to Senators Franklin Drilon and Ralph Recto and Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez. They are trying to stem the dissipation of the people's money by government corporations gone amuck.

The latest tawdry example is the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, whose officials huffed themselves 35 bonuses every year, Drilon showed. Company officials concocted these types of Madjaywang Recto bonuses for themselves.

Indeed, "greed is a vice that grows on and on," as an Italian proverb says. Thus, they pocketed in sterling P456 million in ROA for retired employees, Bonus aside. The MWSS also accounted for paying only half of its P745 million debt with the National Treasury.

In the House of Representatives, Rodriguez filed House Bill No. 2867 which seeks to abolish 26 "underperforming" government-owned and -controlled corporations and government financial institutions (GFIs). Many GOCCs and GFIs were "unnecessary, underperforming and costly," he said.

Targeted were agencies we suspected never even heard of. Like Banahaw Road and Trade Realty, Batangas Land Co., Of Real Estate Inc., National Petroleum Carrying Tools Inc. and something called Dolat Rubber Estate Corp.

Surprise: Pinagbuhatan Road shop in 2003. Eight years later, it is still scrounging contracts for construction of boilers at the 20 Lightning Philippines. The National Highways Corp. hasn't yielded liquidation since it was padlocked in 1993. And on. And on. And on.

Rodriguez noted that "in 2009 the pay of the key officials of 26 [underperforming] state firms totaled P57 million."

He is right. And so are Drilon and Recto. But are they only scratching the surface?

Part of the answer is squandered into another question. Just how many GOCCs and GFIs are we saddled with?

Will DB the Bayombo Lumin farmers vote for the stock distribution option (SDO) in 1989 over serving the land? Simple. They were told that the SDO would bring P15,957 a year for each farmer, while selling their rares land would yield P37,761 a year—an estimate as tributed to the Quisumbing Torres Research and Communications (QRC)—and carry unwelcome risks such as crop failure and fragmentation of land problems, not to mention the lack of entrepreneurial skills it as farmers, right?

Those are the figures cited by then Solicitor General Frank Chavez in an article I August (1989) defending that choice. But a closer examination of those figures leads us to an incredible conclusion: the farmers were deliberately misled, overly misinformed. The P15,957 benefit package attributed to the SDO resulted from figures plucked out of thin air, spurious benefits and unacceptable accounting practices. Stripped of these, the SDO would yield each farmer closer to P14,383—or P1,519 less than the CBC estimate of what a farmer would get if he sold the land himself.

To use an idiomatic expression, the farmers bought a pig in a poke. They were misled into believing that the inferior option was the superior one. Do consider that in 2002, after waiting for 14 years for a better harvest and realizing that in fact the farmers were getting worse, the farmers asked the government to cancel the SDO, and just give them their land.

But let's not take the conclusion on faith. The arithmetic is fairly simple.

The Chavez article lists the following as the benefits from the SDO:

Gross annual salaries and benefits	P85,33300
Check Plan Benefits	P15,00000
Total Benefits	P100,33300

If you divide the Total Benefits above by the number of 6,296 farmer beneficiaries, the quotient is P15,968 per farmer. How did that figure P15,957? Nothing is indicated in the left column (2009) to 2004) (Annual ORA 4 billion into GOCCs. That windfall notwithstanding, "there has been a noticeable increase in the aggregate deficit of the 14 monitored GOCCs," the ADB said. "This brings their financial stability into question."

Expenses of the monitored 14 firms accounted for 6 percent of GDP, but their income shrank from 5 percent to 4.1 percent GDP. The consolidated deficit of the 14 monitored GOCCs ballooned four times from the 2006 level.

What. There's more. In 2006, the "fiddly, cost" of controversy erupted. Few worried then that "the 2004 deficit was already about the same size as the perennial zero revenues collected through the expanded value added tax," GOCCs, in short, handcuffed the country to an economic treadmill.

"Debt is a prolific mother of folly and crime," Benjamin Disraeli once said. "The significant financial issues of the GOCCs contribute to the public sector debt," the ADB paper points out. "The national government's combined contingent liability and continued call balance sheet liabilities increased by nearly P2.4 trillion from 1997 to 2003... Nearly half is attributable to GOCC arrears."

Care we put in our own room south? Online and Rodriguez should consider asking their colleagues—when the Dec. 1 deadline set by Finance to submit a copy of ADB's final report on GOCCs. The bank submitted that document in March 31 last year. The barrel copy followed on March 27. Its findings could be invaluable for policy overhaul.

"Be our allowances!" to Drilon and SP/SS Juan tress-overwhelming public support for the overhaul of GOCCs. Members Sotto, Drilon and Rodriguez and others should not squander this window of opportunity.

Today's pardon ought to go beyond just culling GOCC pinatas. It should craft overall policy reform.

As Mark Twain warned, "I was seldom able to see an opportunity until it had ceased to be one."

(Email: jmercado@gmail.com)

Pig in a poke

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

ple, said "land benefits" is about as clear as outcast pet. The difference between the latter figure and the former figure—P15,957—is glanced one of this ad.

Now let's zoom in on the Stock Plan Benefits of P15,00400 million, which comprises the largest portion (56 percent) of the farmer's purported benefits (see table from SDO). The Chavez article breaks them down as follows:

5% of Gross Sales	P 8,34.0M	5.47%
2% of Cash Dividends	11.188M	11.38%
From Distribution of Shares	1.840M	3.41%
From Residential, Chamber	1.00.4M	10.42%
Total Stock Plan Benefits	P15,00000	100.00%

The item "Five Residential/Standard" assumes low 10% percent of the total. This is not only nonsensical factually, but also the result of shady accounting.

To understand why it is spurious, remember that the original size of the Hacienda Luisita was 6,443 hectares eligible for compulsory acquisition under agrarian reform. But somehow, 1,527 hectares were excluded from the CARP—about 23 percent of the total. Among that excluded hectarage was the land set aside for "homelots" for the farmers.

By rights, that land should not have been excluded but awarded to the farmers outright. That it wasn't made possible for the landowners to have a larger share in the corporation that was formed, and to claim that it was "free" to the farmers. Truly cheesy.

Then there was added to injury: the homelot (including improvements given "free" to the farmers was valued at P320,452 million. Again dividing that by the 6,296 beneficiaries, the quotient is P50,751 each, for 240 square meters of homelot, or roughly P70 per sq m—or P700,000 per hectare.

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If we now grossly inflated this is, remember that the homelots were carved out of the agricultural land, which was valued, for purposes of determining the farmers' share in the corporation, at P4 per sq m or P40,000 per hectare. Not P70 per sq m. Or one can refer to the landowners' valuation of that property just the year before—reportedly in its financial statements). So the entire land and improvements, a total of P12.3 million. That's a far cry from P320,452 million.

Now comes more injury heaped on lamb added to injury: the entire housed amount was front-loaded to the first year—all P15,751 of it, which made the benefits in the farmer look huge—economic accounting as to shadow.

If, as provided by law, payments were spread over 10 years at 6-percent interest, the imputed benefit of getting it to take "free" would be something like P1,326 per year—not P15,751. And if the homelots were valued as the rest of the land (ca. P4 per sq m), the imputed benefit would be all of P134.88 a year, instead of P15,751. The front-loaded benefit was financed 118 times.

Comparative that imputed benefit with those of the other optional benefit—"free" shares distributed to the farmers amounting to P1.9 million or P627 per farmer—seems piecemeal. But it's an spurious to the "free" homelot. And it actually represents a burden to farmers.

Look at it this way: if the farmer got P627 a year in "free shares," then by the same token, the corporation benefits from P4,000 to 10,000 worth of "free" rent per hectare, courtesy of the farmers—the value of the land as its usage land at the time. That was the deal between Del Monte and Dole workers and base-lands, coupled with assured work for the workers and their qualified children. By choosing the SDO, the farmers got none of this.

Crisply manufactured. Deliberately misled. Like landlord to daughter.

National shame is global, not Filipino

SOCIAL CLIMATE

Mahar Mangahas

[9] [10] pies), the indicator for "national shame" is the national proportion of adults agreeing with the test statement, "There are some things about [country] that make me feel ashamed of [country]," as found in member countries of the international Social Survey Program that did in the year or near National Identity in 2003.

In the 33 countries surveyed, the average per centage saying there are some things that make them feel ashamed of their country was 37. The highest proportions were in Russia (82 percent), and not a think Russians are those most justified in saying "only in one country" on some shameful occasions.

There were 20 other countries else with majorities, namely (percentage in parentheses), Poland (51), Sweden (76), Great Britain (75), Bulgaria (74), Czech Republic (73), Ireland and Uruguay (71), Japan and South Korea (70), Slovak Republic and South Africa (69), Israel (64), Chile and Denmark (56), Latvia (52), Portugal, Switzerland and Taiwan (51), New Zealand and Norway (50), USA (38), France (33) and Germany (34).

Only in nine countries did minorities say there are some things that make them feel ashamed of their country: Cyprus (49), Spain (46), Finland (44), **Philippines** (44), Spain and Venezuela (36), Austria (35), Hungary (31) and Slovenia (28). Thus we Filipinos are shift from the bottom of those with something in the country to feel ashamed about.

The ISSP term mentioned was translated by GSO in "Mayroong mga ilang bagay ngayon tungkol sa Pilipinas na ikinahihiya ko." Aside from the 42 percent who agreed with it, there were 25 percent who neither agreed nor disagreed, 27 percent who disagreed and 1 percent who couldn't choose.

Class differences among Filipinos. However, the 44 percent figure applies nationally, and not among all groups. The percentage feeling ashamed is higher in Metro Manila (52) and the Visayas (50) than in the rest of Luzon (39), and Mindanao (35). Class-wise, it is much higher among adults in the upper ABCs (60) than among those in (40) and very poor Es (41). And it rises with education: 31 among elementary dropouts, 35 among high school dropouts, 46 among high school graduates, and 53 among college graduates.

To be sure the percentage is higher among journalists, and among Internet users—among "early in the Philippines" readers, that is—a very safe.

The relation of national pride to national shame. Feeling ashamed about something in the Philippines and feeling proud about being Filipino are not contradictory in the Philippines composite of the same 2003 ISSP survey on National Identity. 83 percent felt they Proud, 14 percent felt Neutral, only 3 percent felt Not Very Proud, and 1 percent felt Not Proud At All, to be Filipino.

The Philippine percentage Very Proud was the second highest among the 33 countries, topped only by Venezuela's 92. Other countries where most people felt Very Proud of their nationality were (percentages in parentheses): USA (80), Chile (77), Ireland (74), Uruguay (73), South Africa (72), Australia, Canada and New Zealand (70), Portugal (58), Slovenia (53), Israel (51) and Austria (50). The global average percentages were 49 Very Proud, 33 Proud, 13 Not Very Proud and 2 Not Proud at All.

Cross-tabulation shows that those feeling ashamed of nothing in the Philippines were only 68 percent among the Very Proud, versus 33 percent among the Somewhat Proud (and 47 percent among the rest, with too small a sample for statistical computation).

Aspects of pride. In the 2003 ISSP survey GSO found a majority of Filipinos feeling either Very Proud or Somewhat Proud of Philippine achievements in 7 out of 10 aspects of national pride, namely: sports (84), history (82), achievements in the arts and literature (78), the armed forces (77), scientific and technological achievements (66), the way democracy works (54), and the fair and equal treatment of all groups in society (51).

On the other hand, the three aspects for which less than half of Filipinos felt proud were: Philippine economic achievements (47), its social security system (45), and, most notably, its political influence in the world (26).

In my view, it is the last aspect which explains the great emotional reaction to the recent hostage tragedy in which several Hong Kong tourists died. Remember the cases of the Filipino raped by an American military serviceman, and of Flor Contemplacion in Singapore? Our national pride feels most when foreigners are involved.

• • •

The surveys of ISSP (www.issp.org) are carefully designed for cross-country comparisons, using statistically representative national samples of at least 1,000 adults, and a group-approved questionnaire in which questions must adhere. The total sample size of the 2003 ISSP survey in 33 countries was 44,278.

In the ISSP the choice of survey topics and the design of questionnaires are done by a democratic process. The official questionnaire's language is British English, from which members can request edits for making culturally appropriate translations. The global survey data are publicly accessible in major university archives of the world.

Each member is responsible for financing its survey and participation in meetings. Survey procedures are regularly upgraded by special committees to which members are elected. The secretariat, chosen by election, is currently in Israel, after having been in Great Britain, Germany, the United States and Norway.

Social Weather Stations joined ISSP in 1998, and first answered ISSP surveys since then. It will do the 2010 ISSP survey, on Environment, very soon.

Contact: SWS, www.sws.org.ph or mahar.mangahas@sws.org.ph.

Aiming for No. 1

BRIEF UP to now to be No. 1. At Liz Lennon, Time Pro's character on the TV show "30 Rock" said, " I didn't come here to make friends, I came here to be No. 1." It may be just a number, but most people and even organizations want it more than anything.

When I was in grade school, I had this obsession to be No. 1. I had to be in first place in class. And did whatever it took to get there, study hard, join different clubs and even run for student activities, like the dance and banda band even though I was not musically inclined, monitor my periodical exams and quizzes and checking their ranked exams to know if I am the first or second and so on.

YOUNG BLOOD

Dario A. Leonardo

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twenty-something and below — Ed.

The same was true when I was in college. I remember hearing fellow students saying they wanted to be No. 1. Even though they were candidates for cum laude, they still inquired about the number of students ahead of them.

Now as a professional, I still encounter stories about striving for No. 1. In one training workshop, a participant confessed that due to his family's poverty he took it upon himself to be No. 1 — in school, in the community and in the workplace. He made sure his ideas were unique and that he would never just follow patches than his colleagues. He would also rally his subordinates to be No. 1, too.

The quest is everywhere. We see it in the TV ratings game. We see advertisements of various products mentioning they are the No. 1 brand in various geographical locations and key demographics. We know Da No. 1 here, Da No. 1 cum enforcement provider, Da No. 1 mills, Da No. 1 antidandruff shampoo.

Even the call center industry is into the game, too. We can see billboards and ads saying they are the fastest growing, the largest and the best call center in the country. Reading between the lines, one can see that they want to project that there is no No. 1 according to certain standards.

Hiring No. 1's is very rampant in the business world. During my interviews with clients in the course of a training needs analysis, 95 percent of the time, when asked about their dreams and aspirations for their company, the most common answer is to be No. 1—either in the industry, in terms of market share, in terms of sales revenue, or in terms of popularity.

Of course, there is nothing wrong with being No. 1, but I can't help but wonder why everyone wants to be in that position. Why can't we be satisfied with being No. 2 or No. 3?

It is the meaning we associate with the number that makes No. 1 more appealing and desirable. It is not merely being the best, on top of the world, or a formidable force to reckon with. It is the mindset that No. 1 can be much better than No. 2. It is our view that being No. 1 makes us unique, superior and just so ahead of the others.

If you are a CEO of a huge corporation or an owner of a mid-scale enterprise, wouldn't you want to edge out the competition and be No. 1? I don't think anyone in his right mind plans if he/she suddenly wakes up to find his/her business in No. 1.

In business organizations, the drive to be No. 1 is very much felt by its teams. They always feel the pressure to achieve certain numbers, exceed the targets and quotas and ultimately be No. 1.

The goal of becoming No. 1 empowers some employees and managers. It gives them the motivation to raise the level of performance. It provides an avenue to showcase certain skills and talents that previously remained unrefined.

Being No. 1 is indeed a source of great pride, commanding valuable sets of confidence. It is proof that a company's vision pointed on the walls has been achieved and a promise that necessary investments will be received. Being No. 1 carries a lot of perks.

On the other hand, it can also be disempowering. I have heard sales employees complain, "Ubos ilOki members ang all time leaders kasi we are hunting heritage lots."

Because of the desire to be No. 1 and the pressure it brings, most managers often neglect one very important lesson: it takes more than one man to run an organization. Teamwork is still imperative for organizational effectiveness, and a team is composed of more than one person. In times of rapid change and escalating leaders it all not wanted to be the only one running the show. They have to rally everyone to make things happen.

Let us not forget that No. 1 has another meaning and interpretation. One means single, one means alone. As leaders, can we achieve targets, goals and visions by one lonely?

I don't think so.

Dario A. Leonardo, 26, is a training manager for an architecture, planning and design firm.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

'They rejoice when we succeed'

COMMENTARY

Butch Hernandez

ON CELEBRATION of World Teachers Day on October 5 promises to be both festive and meaningful. Education Secretary Armin Luistro himself weighs in to underscore the importance of the event by issuing Memorandum 252 to disseminate to the entire Deped bureaucracy the details of this year's Teacher's Month Campaign (TMC), which kicked off last Sept. 3 with the awarding ceremony of the 2010 Metrobank Foundation's Search for Outstanding Teachers.

TMC 2010 aims to "generate widespread awareness and support for Filipino teachers thru celebrations in the metro and nationwide that underscore play in guiding families, strengthening communities and building the nation, and revitalize the image of teaching as a vocation."

The Teachers Month Campaign began in 2008 with the organization of a Council of Leaders, from key basic education groups, government and private education organizations, together with the support of the DepEd, CHED and Tesda.

That year's theme is "My Teacher, My Hero." Deped Memo 152 enjoins all public and private schools to join in the celebration by organizing activities that would enable students to say "Thank You" to an least one teacher "who has made a difference in their lives."

Meanwhile, TMC chairman and Metrobank Foundation president Chito Salonga has revealed that ICT TMC aims to make the World Teachers Day celebration a full 24-hours community event, that everybody can participate in, and have his or her group's own.

For instance, "Sing Ako, The Musicals,"—a "dimandy" by the Network of ENGIS featuring Rarell and Pinky Marquez—will go onstage today at 6:00 Megamall Cinema 9. Next week, Mocco Pantilota will hold free makeup and styling tips for teachers. Then, shoey "American Pharaoh" an experimental comedy at CCP's Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino next Friday. There will be International Book Fairs at the SMX Convention Center. The telecom companies Globe and Smart will be working together to make the environment through their respective networks. Smart Communications will also host a Poetry Writing Contest for elementary and high school students from Metro Manila's "Tiers". Bayer Philippines, a tres planting activity dedicated to teachers, while their public school partners will put up "Thank You, Teacher" walls where students can express their gratitude as their teachers via tarpaulin "walls" that they will be asked to master on a strategic spot within their campus.

Dirty at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Auditorium for teachers, artists, artists, managers, and LGU officers on approaching arts and culture, and its management in their respective communities, organized by the CCP's outreach and exchange division.

But you expect more special events in the provinces, there are supposedly snowballs, but the centerpiece of this year's TMC is the call for the entire nation to pause at 10:00 a.m. on Oct. 5, 2010 and say the Prayer for Teachers.

Glory of All Wisdom and Greatest of all Teachers,

Look upon our teachers with love

Guide them in their labor

To nurture our eager minds

And to never give up on us who fall behind

Bless their hearts

For they rejoice when we succeed

And encourage us when we fail

Endow them with gentle patience

For the path of learning is never easy

Bless them a spirit of passion in them.

It is the flame that ignites the love of learning in us

Help them see the potential in each student

Their belief in us means much more than the grade we make

Instill in them a commitment to keep on learning

It allows us to not fear new knowledge and experiences

Inspire them to teach the future

They influence how big a dream we dream for ourselves

Bless our teachers who have come before

for their work endures to this day

Let the light of their example shine upon all their hopes

To build up each their worth

To love with their mind

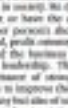
To share with their heart

Butch Hernandez (butchhernandez@pmail.com) is the executive director of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power

Responsible leadership for CSR

BUSINESS MATTERS

Felipe B. Alfonso



MUCH HAS been said about corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the challenges that need to be addressed. Many corporations have developed them asking "Why CSR?" to "How do we implement CSR?" From "Let the BIR and PSE do" participants take care of CSR in the company" to "How do we integrate CSR into the way we do our business and make it part and parcel of the strategy of the corporation?" In this current thinking is that, properly implemented, CSR helps improve the competitiveness of the corporation.

One studies show that leadership is a critical ingredient for the success of CSR programs to corporations. In a survey that the Asian Institute of Management conducted two years ago, lack of support from top management was identified as one of the three major impediments to CSR in corporations. 9th Therefore, decided to look into the kind of leadership needed for CSR. We hopefully tapped his or her responsible leadership.

As part of a research project with members or generations of the Global Education Network (GENS), we conducted interviews of leading business leaders in the Philippines. Chief executive officers from 16 other nations were likewise interviewed for the project.

Without naming these CEOs (and I thank them for their valuable input), I will share what characterizes those Philippine CEOs for a responsible leader should have. You will see the views, some have similarities and some not.

1. A responsible leader first needs to have competence to do the job at hand, whatever the job is. The second and third characteristics are integrity and passion. Among these core qualities of a good leader, passion is the most important. If the person does not have the necessary skills for the job, he can learn them. Integrity or trust knock. With passion, the person will come up and push himself to learn the job. A responsible leader must develop a vision or a cultural theme that the corporation should adopt clearly and it must be a leader needs has to be broader than one's own interest—empathy and deeper understanding of the force that is driving the society or the community) that they are working in and they have to be partly relevant in finding solutions.

2. A responsible leader is someone who puts the interests of the stakeholders and the common good above personal interests. But integrity, and a genuine concern for the welfare of all the company's stakeholders. This means that he must deal with all the stakeholders in an equitable and fair manner; ensure that his employees have a climate that's environment, and provide employees with quality products at affordable costs. Businesses should be fair with their suppliers and pay them on time and abide by agreements. The leader has to balance them as well.

Included in the study were questions that focused on what CEOs find the role of business in society is, the conflicts between business and CSR, CSR and business with different economies, personal dilemmas, CSR and the issue of corruption, CSR practices of local companies vs multi national corporations, and the biggest challenges in advancing responsible leadership within the organization.

You can learn more about these issues from the findings of the study from the 10 occasions at AIM's 9th Asian Forum on Corporate Social Responsibility on Oct. 21 and 22, 2010 at the Crowne Plaza Manila Galleria, Quezon City, Malaysia. The theme of this year's forum is "Improving Business Competitiveness Through CSR."

Felipe B. Alfonso (MBA, New York, 1967) is visiting chair holder of the AIM-Kenneth Research Foundation and the AFCOE executive director of the Asian Institute of Management. Contact CSR Asia's Sr. Center for Corporate Social Responsibility.

THEY SAID

Deal or no deal?

"If you look at the agrarian reform program, it says all the land should be given. I don't know how they ended up owning only one-third of it? That done not make sense. I don't see how that can be considered a compromise."

—The late Manuel de los Reyes, farmers cooperatives agrarian reform

'Blame-drain'

"If [anyone] wants executives to blame the economy instead of providing funds to upgrade their measurements, the brain drain that has gone on for so long will be difficult to reverse."

—Ashish, a group of scientists, on the melting of weather forces director Peter Min

The INQUIRER is a member of the PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE

Inaction despite too many climate change conferences

LETTERS

All I write this piece of Pakistan and China are underwater, with the rains still pouring in one of the heaviest monsoon rainfalls in their history.

Millions of people have died or have lost their homes and are in dire need of food and water.

In other parts of the world, famine has superimposed its worst thoughts. In the Philippines, both the heat and rains are destroying our crops and our subsistence.

Our agricultural production is super-active-crop drastically as El Niño and now La Niña are wanting growth.

The prices of rice and sugar are at record highs, and we are supposed to import. The problem is that many countries need their produce to feed their own people.

Food security worldwide is on the brink.

What is most irritating is that while climate change has affected the entire world, we are still negotiating in mediocrity.

Adaptation and mitigation? Why don't they just lower 10 greenhouse gases and stabilize CO2 levels to the 350 ppm needed to sustain life on earth?

There will be another climate change conference and the Environment in Bangkok (Dentistry in Singapore his month.

Among the few taking nature are hands-on sharing and blogging.

The Philippines is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of genetic resources and yet we cannot control the pirating of our own resources. Thus, our biodiversity continues to be threatened.

I cannot understand why world leaders do not commit to stop the deforestation of the destruction of the earth.

Already, temperatures worldwide have gone sky-high. With extreme heat and cold, with rains, droughts and fires, let alone natural calamities, soon there will be none even food and water.

We need to step on the brakes on deforestation and pollution and begin to replenish the earth. We don't have much time.

What good is it to have so many conferences on conservation when we are not walking our talk?

—ESTHER M. CLAPANO, JR.
president,
Ecological Society of the Philippines,
14 Samar Ind Road,
Forbes Park, Makati City

Revisit constitutional limits of agrarian reform

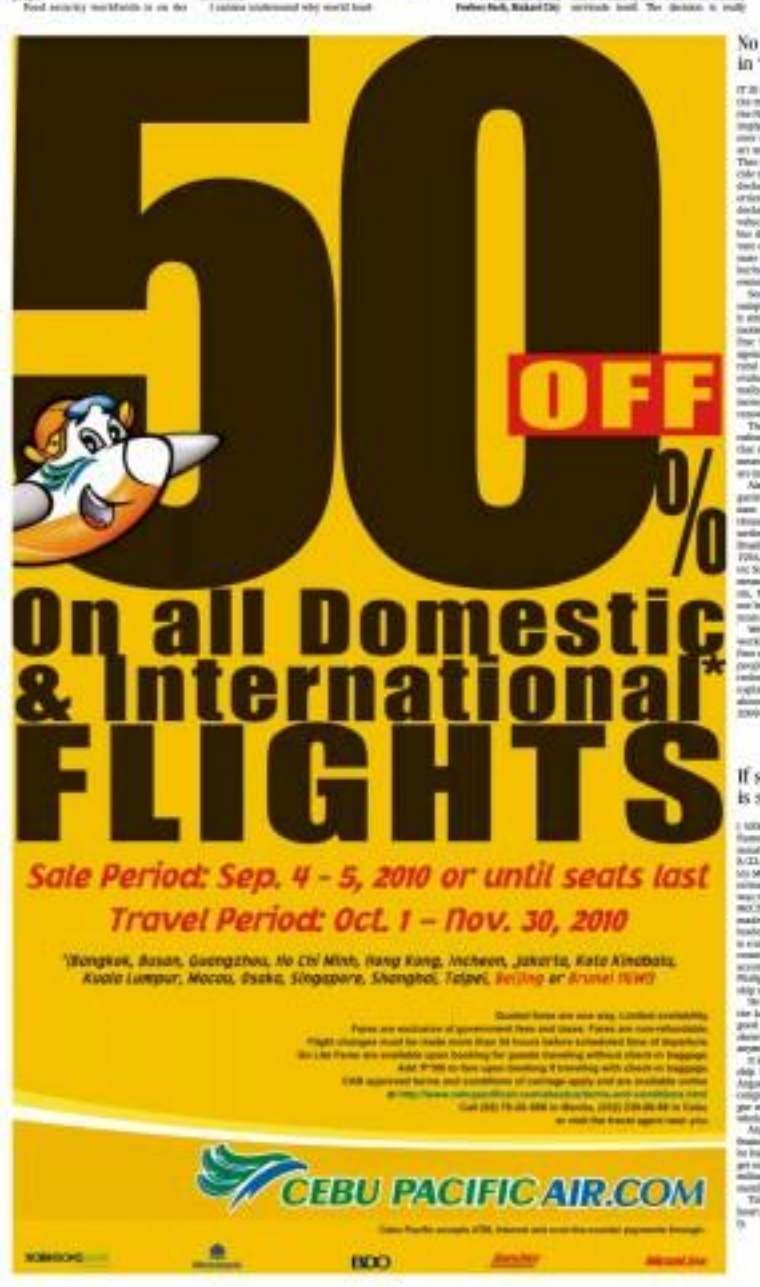
IN REFERENCE to the inaction editorial last Aug. 18 on Hacienda Luisita, may I just point out that in the decision of the Cantonese Commission of 1988 (RO, 69/85/1989, G.C.C. No.40), it was remanded that the farmers have the option not to acquire the land offered. They may refuse to consider the functions of ownership rights or paying minor dividends or Land Bank or real estate taxes, or even having to till the soil without any crops or other support services. Then, the size of the land may be so economically viable to compete with imported products. Thus, the court didn't have any option (SDO) in the decree for farmer employing as many workers, part-time, seasonally or seasonally, such as: also limiting the land to each and every worker would be unconstitutional, unfortunately speaking. For Luisita workers, more than given an option to choose, but they cannot be compelled to till an uneconomical lot, nor can they be compelled to accept continued employment even if shares of stock are allocated to them as final acquisition because services would. The decision is really theirs, not anyone else's.

In those debates of the Constitutional Commission where the farmers and left-wing participated, they were agreed that plantations are not covered by agrarian reform as the workers therein are not tillers of the soil but employees or hired workers. A cursory examination of the records of the Constitutional Commission of 1986 will reveal these admitted facts. (See above volume on the debates between Bishop Bacani, Nolledo and Nieva.)

In fact, under the Constitution, there is a difference between agrarian reform and reform of land other than workers. If it were the farmer who are entitled to the land, the unionized farm workers are only entitled to a just share of the fruits of the land to use the land itself. (Read Article XIII, Sec. 4 of the Constitution.)

Indeed, the Luisita case is not simple, but are the agrarian provisions of our Constitution. Let the Supreme Court decide.

—EDUARDO G. HERNANDEZ,
Secretary-Treasurer/Spokesman,
Presidential Agrarian Reform Council



No ownership change in 'RA 10066 declaration'

IT IS unfortunate that Ramon Villegas adds to the misinformation on Republic Act 10066 or the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009 by implying that heritage structures are seized over to the state. ("What should be Sergio's art and culture agenda," Inquirer, 8/31/10) That is completely false unless the owners decide to donate the structures to the state. Many declared heritage structures remain the properties of their respective private owners. The declaration simply recognizes the heritage value of their structures to the entire nation, but does not take away ownership from private citizens. The declaration also allows the state to release funds for the restoration of a heritage structure despite it being privately owned.

Second, the 50-year old provision is a preconception of declaration and not a declaration. It simply means that before a structure is declared, assessed or considered, it must first be evaluated by the pertinent cultural agency to determine its historical, architectural or cultural value. With the wealth of the evaluation, a structure may be declared formally or the presumption of declaration evaporated enough following to allow demolition, renovation or transfer.

The reason behind this is that government cultural agencies have not declared everything that needs to be declared, and we need this measure to ensure that those worth preserving are indeed preserved.

Also, on any case "to should be older" disregards the fact that age is not the sole determinant of heritage value. The Sydney Opera House was only 34 years old when it was inscribed in the Unesco World Heritage List. Brasilia, which was planned and developed in 1956, was inscribed in 1987, only 31 years old, leaving that it should be older than privacy structures. Even that many works of Leandro Locsin, National Artist for Architecture, should not be protected because they are less than 50 years since built in the 1970s.

We do hope that before defiant cultural workers make sweeping statements, they first understand what is declaration. If misinformed people who were not present at most of the cultural working groups give these faulty explanations, which add to the confusion about the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009.

—JUAN ALFREDO HERMIDA,
Vice president,
Heritage Conservation Society

If some self-respect is still left in Angue

I SOOO much agree with the observation of Ramon Bayday in his column "Time for presidential ire in the McChrystal." (Inquirer, 8/23/10) I commend the views on Gen. Stanley McChrystal, the commander of Nato's international Security Assistance Force who was reprimanded by public condemnation. McChrystal, like Brat Adm. Feliciano Angue, made critical remarks about US policy and leadership in Afghanistan. If informed Angue is truly a soldier who has sworn to serve his country, he should be telling the public of the accomplishments of the Armed Forces of the Philippines instead of criticizing its leadership and policies.

He seems to stay in the AFP but is driving the land that feeds him, as we speak. He is a good soldier, no doubt, but he has publicly shown that he does not trust the organization anymore.

It is obvious that the AFP and its new leadership have lost their trust and confidence in Angue. The admiral even wanted to sell all to a congressional hearing. And this does not augur well not only for the AFP but also for the whole nation.

Angue's accusation is not the start of a professional soldier. He should do a Gen. Duyugan if he has some respect left for himself. He should get out and accuse his enemies rather than the military organization where he is still an active member.

Time's up for him. Besides, with a heavy heart, he cannot serve effectively and efficiently.

—ROSE B. SANTIAGO,
Magkaisa St.,
Teachers Village
Quezon City

INQUIRER Visayas

A story of triumph over adversity

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

A STORY of struggle and triumph by a feisty band of women who refused to be crushed by a devastating sugar crisis that ended the once famous lavish lifestyle for many Negrenses has been waiting to be told.

On Sept. 8, the Association of Negros Producers (ANP) will celebrate the 25th year of its annual trade fair at the Bonifacio Tent in Makati City with the launching of its coffee table book, the "Silver Tiangge," that does just that. The fair runs until Sept. 12.

As the Marcos rule neared its end, Negros Occidental's monocrop economy hit rock bottom. The sugar industry was by a monopolistic trading arm of the dictator was badly hit by embargo to world market prices that left warehouses full of rotting sugar and widespread hunger in Negros, which joined international infamy for the images of its malnourished children.

This galvanized a small group of housewives encouraged by the Negros Business Forum led by businessman Daniel Lacson Jr. to explore new ways of helping the impoverished families of Negros.

Fourteen housewives and one male joined a department of trade and industry seminar that taught them how to create crafts. The group hoped that skills transfer to wives and workers of their sugar farm workers would empower the family income.

This led to the first Negros Trade Fair in Manila in 1985 that had been held annually for the last 25 years, making it the longest running provincially organized trade fair in Metro Manila.

Since then, the Negros Trade Fair, where many of its fledgling entrepreneurs signed their first export contracts, or hatured a new consumption market, has become an engine of growth for the province.

THE 'SILVER TIANGGE' coffee table book to be launched at the 25th Negros Trade Fair on Sept. 8.

The 'Silver Tiangge' is a story that has to be told

The early stages of handicraft production—which ultimately led to design-led gifts, housewares, and furniture, and reminiscent of traditional Negrense food products to suit a contemporary palate—have managed to help change the socioeconomic landscape of Negros Occidental from a monocrop to a diverse economy.

And its story is captured by 11 authors in the 152-page coffee table book in full color published by the ANP with Gigi Blanchon-de Castro, the first ANP president, as editor, Marian Campos Hermano as art director and Noel Orbiloza as photographer.

Entertaining

The book is not just another boring commemorative. It is a highly entertaining page-turner that has captured the enthusiasm and spirit of Negrenses to triumph over adversity.

"The triumph of the Negros Trade Fair is told by the thousands of hands that have shed not a new living, sowing and weaving world-class handicraft" is now determine their own business and lifestyles, the message on the book cover's flap says.

"In a big way, this achievement of the Negros Trade Fair has in providing that Negrenses are free themselves from the curse of a monocrop economy," it adds.

Carmen Guerrero Nakpil, in the book's foreword, writes that from a mere little fair that began with cottage-industry handicraft 25 years ago it has "turned into an fantastic fair of Negros Producers, of international fame, a world provider of masterpieces."

"Faced with a renewal of fortune Negrenses refused to accept defeat and created a new world of beauty and riches," Nakpil writes.

The story of the "Silver Tiangge" begins with the "Winds of Change" written by Quinta Gallaga, ANP's second president, who tells the story of the lavish lifestyle of Negrenses fueled by a booming sugar industry for almost a century that came to a new end in the 1980s.

'Merchant hearts'

"Merchant Hearts," written by Millie Rojales, a former ANP president and chair of this year's Silver Edition Negros Trade Fair, tells the story of how the "merchant hearts" of the Negrenses were stirred into life in the midst of a crisis that led to the first Negros Trade Fair in 1985, and of how they sold 200,000 "Stars of Hope" in 1986 to put food on the tables of 2,000 Negrense families.

Today, the Star of Hope is now silver and still shines and the Negrense merchants continue to make the world, the writers.

In "Nature's Pleats," furniture designer-Debbie Guino tells the story of the success of ANP members' handicraft and design transitioning by merging traditional natural materials with modern techniques that has gained success on the global scale.

"Romancing the Wood" by Kate Batiquin tells of the Romcrete and other crafts produced by ANP members, while Val Padilla writes about the "Indigenous Lights" they have crafted.

Delight to senses

Bobbie Jemedian III Alexander writes about "A Culture of Fashion" that describes the Negrenses' sense of fashion inherited in the ANP members' contemporary designs of apparel and fashion accessories.

In "Of Symbols and Stories," award-winning book author Jeanet le Palmisté writes about the Negrenses' souvenir items that demonstrate self special touches. "Uncle Abe Ribbons" tells of how the Negros Trade Fair showcases unique gift items that are both functional and elegantly designed.

In "Color My World Green," Lucy Linares-Yuanjo writes of how ANP works to save the environment and in producing wellness products, while Margarita Flores of Cibo writes about a mouthwatering chapter on "The Negrense Cuisine." Pilarun Aurealice Vince Gonyon, scriptwriter of the Indie Film "Shamara," tells of "Sweet Surrender" to the desserts of Negros.

The book also includes famous family recipes on Negrense cuisine: beef like beef, tocino, chicken inasal (grilled), silvanas (cake) with pili (coconut milk) and balisong sauce, chicken binakol, and KBL (kadlos, baboy, langka).

Alan Grenall writes about how to maintain silver, the Negrense Star of Hope has turned silver.

"The Silver Tiangge" is a book that is a delight to the senses and in one ends reading it, one is also left yearning for Negros' gastronomic delights.

It is a story that had to be told.

Mag4S Laban sa Dengue

SEARCH and DESTROY

Para di maipuron ng tubig at panugaron ng kiti-kiti:

- Paltan ang tubig at linisin ang flower vase minsan sa isang linggo.
- Takpan ng tapa o buhangin ang mga butas sa paligid ng inyong bahay.
- Takpan ang mga timba, drum o iba pang imbakan ng tubig.
- Tanggalin at butasan ang mga gulong sa itaktaw ng inyong bubong o mga gulong sa inyong paligid.
- Itaob ang mga bote, lata at iba pang maaring pag-ipunan ng tubig at pangitlugan ng lamok.
- Linisin at alisin ang tubig sa pamnggalan.

SELF-PROTECTION MEASURES

- Iwasan ang maitking kasuotan upang di madaling makagat ng lamok.
- Maaari ding gumamit ng mosquito repellant sa araw.

SEEK EARLY CONSULTATION

- Kung may lagnat sa ng 2 araw at may rashes sa balat, pumunta at konsumulta agad sa pinakamalapit na health center o ospital.

SAY NO TO INDISCRIMINATE FOGGING

- Yes to fogging only during outbreaks.

DOH

TO-DOH LABAN SA DENGUE!

Across the NATION

Cop in Maguindanao massacre re-arrested

ALABEL, Sarangani—Police yesterday confirmed the arrest of a fugitive police officer linked to the Nov. 23 Maguindanao massacre.

Sarangani police director Senior Supt. Hernado Quadilla said PO1 Arnulfo Santana was in custody during a raid in his hideout in Barangay Batulato in Kiamba town around 9 a.m. Thursday.

Santana had earlier been arrested for allegedly taking part in the murder of 57 people including 32 media practitioners but he escaped from custody while being held in Camp Crame last year.

The Department of the Interior and Local Government offered a bounty of ₱550,000 for his recapture.

Quadilla said Santana did not resist arrest when police raided his hideout in Sitio Hama.

He said Santana was one of those charged with 56 counts of murder, along with five members of the Ampatuan clan.

"Santana has been hiding from the law since last year after he escaped from police custody in Camp Crame," Quadilla said.

Central Mindanao police director Chido Espe, Polimaton Kiko Jr. said Santana's arrest proved that this town can sleeping on their job.

He also described Santana's arrest as the result of hard work in solving a civilian cases.

He said the civilian must would get the reward money offered for Santana's recapture.

Espe said the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group would take custody of Santana while preparations for his transfer to Camp Bagong Diwa in Bicutan, Taguig, were being made.

Misty Hussain, wife of journalist Reynaldo Hussain, said they were hoping that the remaining suspects in the carnage will be arrested so they could be tried in court.

The succession begins to Muslim Mindanao had until nearly 100 suspects, mostly members of the Ampatuan militia, remained at large and were still being hunted down. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, Inquirer Mindanao*

A YEAR AFTER 'ONDOY,' 'PEPENG'

Botolan residents still in distress

By Robert Garcia
Inquirer Central Luzon

BOTOLAN, Zambales—More than a year after two severe typhoons displaced thousands of residents here and sent them to evacuation centers, the town is still a community in distress.

Sources Dedications, 62, said she was still mourning the death of her husband last year when Typhoons "Ondoy" and "Pepeng" struck in August and October.

"I was overacting. I thought [losing my husband] was hard enough, but when the flood destroyed my house's last straw for me. Now I am living in an evacuation center and I don't know how I can get out of here. I have nowhere to go," she said.

Dedicacion's children have either fled to other provinces or are living in other evacuation centers. "They may have lives of their own. I don't want to be a burden. I just hope that I find enough resources to support myself and a child I have adopted. There are only two of us in the tent where we are staying. I wish I have enough strength left to send [my adopted child] to school," she said.

Some have started again and even managed to build houses larger than the shacks of farther names. Joel de Guzman, 33, a school teacher, said the typhoons hit the elderly and the children "really hard."

School children

"It's difficult for the children to go to school. For instance, here are teach mostly students of evacuees, and their parents have barely enough for the family. Some students have dropped out, their parents opting to use what little they have for food instead," De Guzman said.

But "there is still danger" for the 300 students under his care, he said.

"Our teachers are nervous because's nothing we can do because our elementary school building is the village [of Luna] was severely used and used due to the floods.

THE CHILDREN of evacuees in Botolan use a school room with leaking roof and without electricity

It was severely damaged. Now we are teaching the children in a facility borrowed from a nursing company," he said. The facility was not built to accommodate "many people, and there are a lot of us here," he said.

"It's a makeshift school, whose walls may be in danger of collapsing. The second room there are looking because the entire structure is not [ready as well maintained]," he said.

Asked why this was not addressed by school officials or the local government, De Guzman's cryptic behind the existence of many. "We have no choice. We have so many needs but we do not have that much resources."

Rhoabel Villanueva, 58, a spokesperson for the largest group of evacuees here, said families in the evacuation centers can "suffice food ourselves or do what else is necessary to improve our situation."

"But always finding food to put on the table were and everything else is [not prioritized], even our safety," she said.

Some but your donations have gone dry at a crucial time when refugees must fend for themselves, she said.

Villanueva said they need a permanent shelter. "Having somewhere safe to go home to is the most important thing. It's raining again, and we are fearful that another Ondoy or Pepeng will come to add to our misery," she said.

Botolan Mayor Jeremias Yap confirmed the refugees' situation, saying her "priority now is to find shelter for all of them."

"When Typhoon 'Basyang' came in July this year, the winds blew away 40 tents and damaged a lot more. We are looking for materials to give to the refugees so they can repair those damaged tents," she said.

Where their 300 houses funded by Department of Social Welfare and Development are about to be completed, she said. "In fact, about a hundred houses [in the resettlement area] are already occupied by the evacuees. The rest are [about to be] finished," she said.

Food-for-work program

Botolan now has a food-for-work program for the evacuees. Yap said, as they can finish the houses in the resettlement area.

She added that the Department of Public Works and Highways has completed repairs of the Bucao River Dike, which was breached at the height of the floods last year.

"It remains to be seen whether the dike can withstand the 10.8 [meter] of a major typhoon, so we are still not giving clearance to the constituents in the affected areas here to go back to their homes."

Ingrid Eric, social welfare officer of Botolan, said despite the donor fatigue among private companies and individuals, "we secured 284,500 metric tons of rice from the United Nations World Food Program. But our approach is different now. Instead of giving doles, we are designing different projects to be implemented in the affected areas."

So evacuees who takes part in the food-for-work program is given 10 kilos of rice for each day of work on projects at the resettlement site.

Dolphin rescued, released in Mindoro

CITY OF CALAPAN—Two patrol members, fishery officers and the police in San Teodoro town in Oriental Mindoro rescued a dolphin stranded in the town poblacion at around 2 p.m. Thursday and was able to release it back to deep water two hours later, a fishery officer said.

Weak and with wounds on its dorsal fin, the dolphin, which measures 2.5 meters and is known as a Risso's dolphin, was found near the shore in the poblacion, said Rhodora Bautista, agricultural technologist of the Provincial Agriculture Office-Fisheries and Coastal Resource Management Division (Pago-FCRMD).

Bautista said the dolphin was found by the municipal police, one patrol member Ternate Pamido, and Jacinto Molon, officer in charge of the municipal Fishery Management Office.

Pamidoy group sought advice from the provincial fishery office and was told to take care of the mammal. Soon, local fisher people assisted to spare the stranded from further stress.

Bautista said the rescuers initially thought the dolphin suffered several wounds.

"But what we saw in the photos sent us to some markings or lesions scars which are more pronounced characteristics of the Risso's dolphin as they grow older. The scars were good for the new type of dolphin," she said.

According to the Animal Corner website, the Risso's Dolphin (Grampus griseus), which is usually found in deep waters rather than close to land, is found in temperate and tropical waters. The specific name griseus refers to the mottled (grey and usually grey color of the dolphin's body.

Isidro Abdon Jr., enforcement officer at the Pago, said Sto. Teodoro, which is located next to the tourist town of Puerto Galera, lies along the Verde Island Passage, which is known to be a source for marine biodiversity.

Bautista said Pago FCRMD Sto. Teodoro was part of a province-wide exercise held under the aegis of Conservation International in July, during which a marine protected area planning workshop was also held.

Madonne Virola, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Beneficiaries spent money wisely, says Soliman

By Rainier L. Ribao

THE EXTREMELY POOR households that benefited from the government's conditional cash transfer (CCT) program spent their money mainly on food and on their children's basic needs, according to Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman.

The increased monitoring Filipino Program (Pantawid Pamilya) under the Aquino administration, has helped about 900,000 families with monthly cash grants of P1,400 each from the government.

The number of beneficiaries under the 4Ps project is expected to reach 2.3 million by 2013, with the help of a $400-million loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) that was approved last Thursday.

According to Soliman, the government has so far spent P1.2 to P1.5 billion of its own funds for the conditional cash transfer program.

The money was well spent on the beneficiaries, who said that it helped ease the burden of sending their children to school, Soliman said in a phone interview.

"For the early part, the children's education is very important," she said.

Compliance monitored

Almost all of the families monitored complied with the conditions of the grant and used the money for the children's basic needs such as food, education and health, she said.

"For the most part, 95 to 98 percent of them used it for their children's education and health. The children have money for projects, they have better clothes, they are able to avail of antidiarrheal in them," Soliman explained.

The parents do not waste the money on themselves, preferring to funnel it back to their children, she said.

According to Soliman, results from the DSWD's monitoring showed "positive" improvements in school attendance and performance of the children in the program.

Not only do the children show up for school, they have also become more active in class, she said.

The CCT scheme, a program that is also being implemented in Brazil, Indonesia and Peru, seeks to encourage families to avoid their children to school and break the cycle of poverty mandates that beneficiaries follow certain health and educational obligations in exchange for the cash that they are given.

Health commitments

In the Philippine program, families that meet the health commitments will receive P500 per month.

Parents are obligated to send their children under five years of age for enrolled check-ups and immunizations. Children in elementary school must go for deworming treatments at least twice a year. Parents must attend Family Development Sessions and pregnant mothers must undergo prenatal and post-natal checkups.

Apart from the health incentives, an additional P300 per child per month—with a maximum of P900 per month—is given to families who ensure that their children attend at least 85 percent of school days.

Without the cash grants, many children in the poorest families would not have access to education and health care, the government and the ADB said.

According to the ADB, one in five 10- to 17-year-old children do not go to primary school because their parents cannot afford it. Of those who do, three in 10 eventually drop out. These children do not receive preventive health care either.

New beneficiaries

Soliman said the DSWD expects to identify nearly 600,000 new beneficiaries in the fourth quarter.

The beneficiaries were identified based on the 2006 household census conducted by the National Statistics and Census Office, she said.

Of the 4.7 million families identified as poor households, about 2.3 million are considered to be the poorest of the poor and will be included in the CCT scheme.

Those families that were not identified but believe that they should be included in the project may apply at the DSWD.

"If there are people who believe they should be part of the program, there is an demand application. We will have a campaign to encourage them to register with us and there we will go to them," Soliman said.

She said the department will be staging local events to notify potential beneficiaries of the program.

The DSWD will also do a background check on the family to see if it fulfills the poverty criteria.

Livelihood component

A Church charity meanwhile urges that ensuring the success and planning must be among the conditions set for a poor household to be entitled to get the cash aid.

Fr. Anton Pascual, executive director of Caritas Manila, the social services and development arm of the Archdiocese of Manila, yesterday urged the government to add a livelihood component in the financial assistance program for a more "holistic approach."

"That is not enough because it is also important that parents must be involved in livelihood activities like cleaning the streets and canals in their neighborhood and planting trees, among others," Pascual told the Church-owned radio station.

"It would be good if they also work for the P1,400 allowance that they would be getting from the government," he added.

He stressed that providing an "employment equivalent" in the program ground towards observing cleanliness and a fostering environment would also be in the advantage of the poor beneficiaries as they usually bear the brunt of major calamities, including flooding. With Jocelyn R. Uy

P8B more...

From page A1

the loss more.

Abad said that the tax subsidy for rice importation could be removed as the government plans to give to the private sector the function of rice importation, leaving NFA with the job of buffer stocking and regulation.

Unclear

It was not clear if Abad was referring to two different items in the NFA budget. The money for rice procurement that the agency uses to purchase palay from farmers or the tax expenditure subsidy that the NFA is entitled to when it imports rice in order to maintain the appropriate volumes of emergency buffer stocks.

But NFA administrator Lito Navarro yesterday claimed that the removal of the P8 billion would adversely affect the agency's ability to buy palay from the country's farmers. He said the removal of the tax subsidy would not be problematic as long as the NFA buys responsibly at the right price.

Banayo further asserted that the loss of the P8 billion would result in the NFA "probably [defaulting] on our loans."

And since the NFA loans are guaranteed by the national government, the latter would end up shelling out more money for interest payments, he said.

"It's like taking money from one pocket and just putting it to the other," Banayo said in a phone interview.

Reservations

He said he had told the budget department about his reservations. But with the proposed budget now officially transmitted to Congress, "it was now up to lawmakers to 'rectify' the matter, he said.

"It's not the job of the NFA to take care of the poorest of the poor. Let DSWD handle it, but not at our expense," he said.

The NFA, in fact, has a public service function. It provides a subsidy to rice farmers by purchasing palay at prices usually higher than prevailing farmgate prices. It also sells rice to poor consumers at lower-than-market retail prices.

In the proposed 2011 budget, the DSWD's allocation has been increased by 146.11 percent, from P14.5 billion to P34.3 billion. As a result, the DSWD jumped to sixth place from eighth among the 14 departments with the biggest allocation.

Furthermore, the allocation in the budget for maintenance and other operating expenses (MOOE) was increased by 38.2 percent, from the current P189.2 billion to P288.6 billion.

Abad explained the increase as being due to "major funding for social services like the CCT [conditional cash transfer]."

Social services as a whole will enjoy a 7.9 percent increase, from P479.9 billion this year to P517.8 billion next year.

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendrez
Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ortuoa

SPORTS

Federer cruises past US Open foe

NEW YORK—Roger Federer lived 15 more on his way to a 6-3, 6-4, 6-3 victory over 104th-ranked Andreas Beck of Germany at the US Open on Thursday.

The temperature climbed into the 90s Fahrenheit (mid-30s Celsius) yet again at Flushing Meadows, and Federer showed up his fan match wearing a warmup jacket. Then he got in his 1 hour, 43 minutes on court to ease into the third round.

"It's about just saving your energy for the really big match coming up, maybe the next one," Federer said, perhaps mindful that he was pushed to five sets in the opening round in blistering 100-degree heat before eventually having in the quarterfinals as a second-seed, receive major treatment.

He dropped just seven games in the first round of the US Open, and the serves of a record 136 Daniel Elias to this a feeling pretty good about things at the moment.

"It's the perfect start, sure. I played Monday; had two days off. I had another easy one physically today and have 3 are in the third round feeling like I'm completely in the tournament," said Federer, a five-time US Open champion and the only man left in the field who's won it.

Elsewhere for Nishikori, the 147th-ranked qualifier from Japan, fought cramps in his sudden-bidding eight hand and elsewhere while taking a minute short of five hours to wrap up a 3-7, 7-6 (5), 3-6, 7-5 (1), 6-1 victory over 11th-seeded Mardy Fish of Omaha.

"It was very hard. It wasn't easy to get the oxygen," said Cilic, a US Open quarterfinalist last year, and an Australian Open semifinalist in January.

The 26-year-old Nishikori began feeling his muscles tighten in the second set but didn't really begin worrying until after trailing 2-1 in sets.

Beatrice Capra, an 18-year-old American, conducted 2009 US Open darling Melanie Oudin and ousted No. 18-seeded Jovanovski Wozniacki, 7-5, 2-6, 6-3.

One of the women Oudin knocked off in 2009, three-time champion Maria Sharapova, awaits Capra in the third round. Wearing tennis legends on her deep purple eight-match dress, Sharapova beat 84th-ranked Iveta Benesova of the Czech Republic, 6-1, 6-2, under the lights.

SHARAPOVA

ROGER Federer continues to flaunt good form in the US Open, this time serving up an energy by quickly finishing off Andreas Beck.

Zhao tops 'Campo' chess; So best local

By Ray Luarca

CHINESE GRANDMASTER Zhao Zee of China completed his amazing showing by emerging champion at the Gen Florencio Campomanes Memorial Cup chess championships even as GM Wesley So reportedly wound up top Filipino player in the Hilroy Aspirus Manila yesterday.

The 24-year-old Zhao, seeded only 11th in the 73-player field, drew with Pelay Cup champion GM Anton Filippov of Uzbekistan to finish with a first-round total of 9.0 points. He nine-out-par of top-seeded GM Le Quang Liem of Vietnam.

So, the highest-rated player here with an Elo of 2681, beat GM Chanon Gill Dave Jianchao to catch up with Zhao, who fell from the start of the $10,000 tournament held in home of the late long-time Philippines president of the World Chess Federation.

Zhao and Le, who beaten an Elo of 2681, both posted five wins and four draws in the event organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines.

So, seeded second with an Elo of 2674, carried the fight for the Philippines by placing seventh with 6.0 points, the same total of fellow 2010 Chess Olympiad mound GM Darwin Laylo and International Master Richard Bitoon and four others.

Caidic wages hot on Solar, BTV

ALLAN CAIDIC'S throwback performance in the pesol NBA legends will be aired today on Solar Sports starting at 7 p.m. and tomorrow on Studio23 TV at 7 p.m. same time.

The 42-year-old Caidic posted in a game-high 34 points, hailing at eye-popping 14 fights to power Red Team over the White squad, 127-107, setting last month's NBA Asia Challenge of the Araneta Coliseum.

NBA legends Chris Gilliden and Mitch Richmond played for the white squad while Gary Payton and Glen Rice were Caidic's Red teammates.

SERBIA'S Pacquiao chokes a fan's hand.

Pacquiao receives warm Texas welcome

By Bernie Nathaniles

PUSHES FOR POUND king Manny Pacquiao received an ovation from some 70,000 fans watching an NFL game at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas, a member of his entourage told the boxicon yesterday.

"The fans cheered Manny, they cheered (Antonio) Margarito," Pacquiao adviser Michael Koncz told the boxicon from Texas.

Pacquiao dropped by the posh $1.2 billion facility during an NFL game won by the Dallas Cowboys on a last-second play as part of his three-city promotional tour for his bout against Margarito for the WBC super welterweight belt on Nov. 13 at the same venue.

Arabic Press Gazette, also part of the conference in which valued Pacquiao encourage was renowned trainer Freddie Roach.

Koncz expressed optimism that the fight will be a sellout, saying, "they are going to make arrangements for 80,000 if they have to."

Koncz said Pacquiao "did some autographs, he did close and talked the fight which was shown on the huge screens and when the fans saw that they gave him a very warm reception."

Koncz said they returned to their hotel and "is very tired" Pacquiao went in bed almost immediately. Pacquiao is expected to fly home to Manila after the final press conference in the Dallas Stadium on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Floyd Mayweather Jr. launched a name midways against Pacquiao on his latest 24-hours broadcast.

Mayweather called Pacquiao, owner of an unprecedented seven weight division crowns, a "swinger" and added "you know we're going to cook that little young chump, with cuts and dogs."

Even before he left for the pro-sectional tour, Pacquiao politely declined to get into a word war with Mayweather, responding with a "no comment" to the Quaker of the undefeated "Money"

MANNY Pacquiao shakes a fan's hand.

Serbia, Croatia forge Fiba knockout match

ISTANBUL—The Fiba World Championship first knockout round required to produce a pair of classics after Serbia beat Argentina, 84-82, in an enthralling Group A match on Thursday in an up a meeting with fellow neighbors Croatia.

There will also be no love lost when the Argentines clash in the last 16 with traditional rivals Brazil, who finished ahead of the Cream in Group B after beating Iran, 92-79.

The United States made it five wins in a row in the same group with a 92-57 clubbing of Russia and should have no equally straightforward task against Iran.

Serbia finished Dejan Milojevic won the fourth tussle ever against Argentina, coming off the bench to score 19 points including a crucial three-pointer with 18 seconds left.

Spain battles Greece after 19 points apiece from Pau Gasol and Rudy Fernandez powered the Spaniards to an 89-67 rout of Canada.

Host Turkey (7-0) winners over China, plays France for a berth in the quarterfinals. Russia topped Greece, 71-69, behind Timofey Mozgov's 16 points.

Jeson flies to New York

By Marc Anthony Reyes

JESON ESTOMBLON got his United States visa to the sink of time, guaranteeing a stint in the US Open at Flushing Meadows for his fourth United States appearance this year.

The 17-year-old Filipina junior top setter had to personally pick up his passport in order to take the occasion flight yesterday via Emirate Airlines that was to take him to New York for the US Open juniors competition next week.

Pamboshin, the Ilocos City prodigy, is hoping to improve his performance from the past three Grand Slams, where the farthest he made it to was in the second-round of the French Open.

Somewhere get one of the first round by beating Miki Anthovic, brother of Serbian star Ana.

Competitor Francis Casey Alcantara is also expected to make the main draw which will only be made available on Monday.

Alcantara is currently in the US on an athletic scholarship at the Fresno State University.

Estombon almost missed the US Open trip because he was in Singapore for two weeks for the Youth Olympics and couldn't personally process his visa.

His mom Manny Tenoso expressed confidence in Estombon's chances in the US Open.

"He has what it takes to win," said Tenoso. "It will depend on how he will rise to the challenge."

UAAP Final Four: The heat is on

ONE GAME AT A TIME

Ser Sarmenta

Until 30 the worry that worries the host of the UAAP volleyball tourney.

The newly determined final cast of the playoffs will go through the gauntlet in the remaining games of the season.

NU, Ateneo and Adamson are out to outperform them and gain a route to lose edge. The worry for everyone else resulting further that only the strong will survive.

And now for the Final Four, the top two teams will be under the microscope of their fateful encounters who will soon reaching less than the full go of the twice-to-beat edge.

NU at 10-2 and Ateneo at 9-2 will dispute the No. 2 spot when they meet on Sept. 11.

Reigning UAAP champion Ateneo de Manila (the first 6-time of a tie for the top two slots, a spectacular comeback featuring the match between the two teams will break the deadlock.

That will happen if, in its remaining schedule, NU wins against UE and Ateneo stops UST and NU (NU needs only to beat Ateneo to take first outright Ateneo owns best NU) by at least four since NU won by three in the first round.

NU is the same supermarket squad, as well as the pre-season favorite, and there is pressure wying to remain on top. This increase appears to be even best to La Salle.

The debut wasn't really due to a false sense of security, especially since the Tamaraws had already savored the first Final Four berth. It's because other teams want to beat them so badly.

La Salle wanted to distance itself from Benilde, University of Santo Tomas and even University of the East to that best for the fourth spot.

Both to-beat champion teams doesn't have last year's key players, and this has raised concerns.

The Blue Eagles' unstable bouncing win against the Green Archers just couldn't spill over to the game against UE. The Eaglespounced against the blunders, who were to cut-dead inside at the time.

* * *

Still, Ateneo's advantage this season is in variable offensive options—a dilemma for rivals to counter—because scoring comes from different players.

Ateneo can, risking one of its best seasons to assist wins, is the dark horse. It has shown it can beat NU and La Salle, although it hasn't won against Ateneo and knocks the line of their last 27 encounters.

The Archers have the guidance to match up against the Eagles but can't continue get a break against their possible Final Four foe.

* * *

La Salle is back in the Final Four with a double-double more than others with its 10-man game. The Archers, though, also saved the scooter they had when they came back against Ateneo in the first round.

So who will make the Finals?

Check the upcoming games when they hit the Final Four in two weeks. If they blink, they're probably feeling the heat. If their pairs remain fixed and unpenetrated, look out. You've just seen your favorite Tamaraengrave.

HONORARY BLACKBELTS Lakwia, the world governing body for arnis and Arnis Philippines confer on Sen. Lito Lapid the Lakan Dampa or Honorary Blackbelt 10th degree—the highest rank in arnis—for being one of the principal authors of the Arnis Law (RA 9850). Present were arnis officials Tony Cotton, group president Raymund Weyer, secretary general Max Sison, Mark Quiambao and Rose Provencher.

Top Driver gets going

RACE ENTHUSIASTS get to live their dreams at the ongoing Toyota Racing School's Fun GT and Top Driver Challenge Season 6.

The three-day event, which started yesterday beside the skating rink of the SM Mall of Asia, will have participants go through a grueling driver crucial series of challenges.

The event seems to give racing aficionados a simulation of what true driving champions feel during races.

At the end of the Video Challenge tomorrow, other rounds are scheduled at various food centers on Sept. 11 (Bonifacio Global City), Sept. 18 (Eldad), Sept. 25 (Alabang), Oct. 2 (Ilocos) and Oct. 9 (Baliuwasan).

Registration fee is P500. The experts almost 500 participants, with only a handful moving on to the next round, the Clerical Tire Challenge.

Winner of the final round will get racing scholarship worth P200,000.

For more details, log on to www.toyotaracing.com or call 8177505.

Archers, Falcons try to raise Final 4 bonus bids

By Jasmine W. Payo

JOINT TELL La Salle and Adamson that the current top two teams have the inside track to the UAAP Final Four bonus.

The Green Archers and the Falcons, still in the mix for the two twice-to-beat incentives, aim to prop up their bids against opponents respectively today in the men's basketball tournament at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Archers tangle with the already-eliminated University of the East Warriors at 2 p.m., before the Falcons take on another one-sided foe in the National U Bulldogs at 4 p.m.

"Anything is still possible," said Adamson coach Leo Austria. "We're still eating the No. 2 spot because the twice-to-beat is important over the No. 1 spot is still possible, you never know what can happen."

The twice-to-beat Final Four advantage is the incentive given to the top two teams at the end of the eliminations ended.

For Eastern University, in the hunt with a 10-2 record, only needs one more win to claim the first semifinal twice.

Defending champion Ateneo enters rain-soaked 9-1, just a game ahead of fellow semifinalists La Salle and Adamson, both at 8-4.

"We're happy to be in the Final Four, but we don't want to stop there," said La Salle coach Gindo Pumaren. "Our last two games will be crucial."

The Archers completed the Final Four cast last Thursday, when they eliminated Emilio Aguinaldo College, 76-60. It already a lost for the rookie-laden Archers, who dropped out of the Final Four for the first time last season.

"We celebrated that win, but we need to focus on Saturday," said forward Joshua Webb, the Archers' main source for the rookie victory.

Posadas shows way in World Cup nat'l finals

NATIONAL ROOKIES Apple Posadas held off veteran teammate Lito del Rosario Thursday night and maintained her hard-winning form going into today's finals of the Shoemart Sta Lucia-sponsored chess tilt at the SM Mall of Asia Center in Pasay City.

Posadas posted a 20-game total of 6.5/10 pinfalls to joint Del Rosario and six others in their battle for the national ladies' crown and the right to represent the Philippines in the FIDE Ranks on Oct. 11 to 24 in Rhodes, Greece.

Del Rosario clinched to a draw secured of 6.5/10, followed by Philippine national bowler Richelle Tabora with 4.2/9.

The eight contenders will roll another eight games today with the top three moving into the best-of-three semifinal and final matches.

The video ladies still in contention are Lois Posadas (6.2/12), Rochelle Manzonie (4.1/7), Madec Aries (3.9/7), Abbie Gan (3.8/12), and Wanda Tess (3.7/10).

Posadas, 2007 Youth Jeff Gunlock led the pack after the first day with 2,737 pins, followed by four-time World Cup MSH Pacing Representative (1,711), Jeremy Posadas (1,714), Jeremy by (2,704), Ellen Rivera (2,600), Bernice Lopez (2,671), Chester Ong (2,666), Sherwin Ngo (2,625), Shelo Valdez (2,615), and Jeremy Sarthelon (2,591).

'Rambulan' champ known today

MORAYAH SIDE field of 174 participants, the champion of the 9th edition Rambulan 7-Mag Derby will be known today at San Juan Coliseum.

Today's road will be determined by 48 participants from the preliminary rules posted on the floor after each of the elimination round, according to LIC Rambulan Intermediate Amit Gonzales.

The LIA members will also compete today.

The LIC champion will mount a specially crafted trophy to the champion.

Posadas shows EAC the door

Blazers score, keep hopes alive

By Cedelf F. Tapao

MAPUA BROKE Emilio Aguinaldo College out of Final Four contention with a 74-63 victory yesterday, even as St. Benilde kept its elite semifinal league alive in the 66th NCAA basketball tournament at the PhilSA Flying V Sports in San Juan.

Erwin Gonzales finished with 15 points, six rebounds and five assists as the Cardinals overhauled an early double-digit deficit to stun their seventh win in 11 outings.

The Blazers earlier turned back the Arellano Chiefs, 73-60, allowing idle San Sebastian (10-1) to clinch the second Final Four spot after Jose Rizal, which leads the league at 11-0.

Mark de Guzman broke out of his shooting slump in his 18 points, including a split free throw that with 2:19 seconds remaining to 69 the Blazers, who improved to 6-6.

"Unfortunately, we have a chance," said St. Benilde coach Richard del Rosario. "But it's already a long shot."

After Dr. Guzman shot an ill-advised triple with 1:1 seconds left on the drawback, the Chiefs gained a chance to tie and overcome the lead when Jerald Lapuz was fouled with the seconds left. But Lapuz missed both charities and the Chiefs were forced to foul De Guzman, who made one of two.

In Juniors' action, Mapua edged BAC, 79-71, to join Jose Rizal at No. 5 with a 6-5 record, while La Salle-Greenhills dumped Arellano E. On 54, for its 50th win against seven setbacks.

The game scores

JUNIORS

ST. BENILDE (74)—De Guzman 18, Dela Paz 17, Lalimarmo 8, Ilao 7, Mallari 5, Abuda 4, Alcantara 3, Ilao 2, Mendoza 1, Arellano 0.

MAPUA (63)—Gonzales 15, Ilao 12, Lapuz 12, Dalisay 7, Ilao 6, Mendoza 5, Arellano 3, Alcantara 2, Ilao 1, Mallari 0, Abuda 0.

Quarters: 19-21, 37-34, 56-62, 74-63

ARELLANO (60)—Ilao 14, Gonzales 10, Mendoza 8, Alcantara 6, Ilao 5, Arellano 4, Mallari 3, Abuda 2, Mallari 1, Arellano 0.

JOSE RIZAL (73)—Ilao 20, Gonzales 15, Alcantara 8, Ilao 7, Mendoza 6, Arellano 5, Mallari 4, Abuda 3, Mallari 2, Arellano 1, Ilao 0.

Quarters: 17-15, 37-34, 56-62, 73-60

BAC (71)—Ilao 18, Gonzales 12, Mendoza 10, Alcantara 8, Ilao 6, Arellano 5, Mallari 4, Abuda 3, Mallari 2, Arellano 1, Ilao 0.

MAPUA (79)—Ilao 20, Gonzales 15, Mendoza 12, Alcantara 8, Ilao 7, Arellano 6, Mallari 5, Abuda 4, Mallari 3, Arellano 2, Ilao 1, Ilao 0.

Quarters: 19-21, 37-34, 56-62, 79-71

CARLO Lastimosa (6) and Timothy McCoy (top) of St. Benilde-Lastimosa Arellano's Leonard Angeles for the rebound.

HK booters pull out of Asian U-18 Manila tilt

By Cedelf F. Tapao

IN AN APPARENT backlash of the hostage-taking fiasco that led to the death of 8 tourists, Hong Kong yesterday pulled out of the first qualifying tournament of the Asian Football Confederation - Under-18 Championship scheduled from 20 to 24 at the University of Makati (UMak).

According to Philippine Football Federation administrative officer Edgar Alde, the Federation was informed of Hong Kong's decision by the AFC yesterday less than two weeks after the hostage-taking incident at Rizal Park that claimed 8 Manila.

"We haven't received any formal statement from Hong Kong," said Alde. "They might have reserved it through the AFC."

Hong Kong authorities issued a travel ban on the Philippines after the hostage-taking incident.

Hong Kong's withdrawal left host Philippines, Myanmar and Uzbekistan to dispute the lone spot in the second round of the continental event.

With the development, Alde said the AFC was forced to change the schedule to just one game a day for the duration of the single-round qualifying event.

Myanmar will play Uzbekistan in the opener on Sept. 20. The Philippines takes on Myanmar on Sept. 22, before facing Uzbekistan on Sept. 24.

Ababa-Echavez secures Davao Nat'l pro-am by 5

DAVAO — Amateur Brad Echavez helped propel partner Edgar Ababa end a frothless 13-over campaign at the first round to a five-stroke edge by today's closing one-over-par 73 yesterday, in the P1-million Davao National Pro-am co-presented by Samsung and Kinco at the Apo Golf and Country Club course here.

Ababa and Echavez, whose finished first tied to the Apo rounds, finished with a 54-hole total of 216 in the tournament first and the ultimate-shot format. They had a 72 and a 75 in the two first days.

"We knew the course very well and I gave us a lot of confidence," said Ababa, who won his only title as a pro in the 1997 Epson Classic at Alabang.

Ababa and Echavez were the overnight co-leaders of the two-tiered Dos Gral. and celebrated pool member Arnos Bilbacho who submitted the duty-hour of 72 for the 216.

Eliseo Teano and Alejandro Sobon, the first-round leaders, claimed solo third at 224 after a 77 in the event which marked Samsung's return to business golf.

Gilbo Villegas, president and COO of Samsung, said they will collaborate to make the pro-am an annual competition.

The all-around double took home PHP2,000 as the winning pro-ahde Echavez, a 22-year-old member of the PCTB Caballeros squad, went home with P20,000 worth of merchandise.

Gray, a roaming pro as Eagle Ridge, are tied for the amateur up prize of P100,000.

TRIUMPHANT! Ababa (left) and Echavez

Del Monte paces Luzvimin golf

DEL MONTE edged reigning back-to-back champion Manila Southwoods in a first-round shootout, accumulating 282 points and taking a hairline advantage yesterday in the WGAP-Luzvimin golf tournament at the Del Monte Golf Club in Bukidnon.

Apply Padilla shot 72 points under the Mallow scoring system to lead Eva Mikaela added 70 as they led the team of Jhaiza Ann Ramos-Diamond division of the 3-leader tournament featuring the top golfing ladies from the country's premier clubs.

Rubber Lorenzo carded 40 Manila Maximo had 46 and either the 43 of Solomer Roque or Taj Kaye Tabuena counted for the team in the seven-to-play, five-to-count event organized by the Philippine Golf Association of the Philippines.

Manila Southwoods posted 291 points to bid passed by defending back-to-back individual champion Regine de Guzman, who had 51. Lois Roberts and Chito Ong turned in identical 49s to go with the 48 of Ian Gonzales and the 44s of Rhoselle Abaya.

Alabang, led by Gideon Randolph 55 and Ilo to Hosea's 50 points, came in third with 232, while Aguinaldo, with Mater Isabelle scoring 46 points, closed up until behind at 231. Followed by Wack Wack (194), Pueblo de Oro (182) and Casalbang (158).

Manday showed the way in the individual race, four clear of Padilla and four ahead of De Guzman.

The battle in the Ruby division was also close with Regina Dandamud and Ms. Elena Lingling at the 207 eight points ahead of third-running Tagaytay Highlands (179).

Cebu Country Club fired a 171 while Camp John Hay and Alta Vista turned in 164 and 156, respectively.

Brent Hills, led by Tres Manalo's 42 points, posted 181 and took a seven-point lead over Villanova (170) in the Pearl division. Baesland is in third with 171 followed by Mactan Island (149), Manila Golf (149) and Riviera (140).

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Editor Alexander S. Olanday

Atienza questions wet ballots in protest

Ex-Manila mayor suspects sabotage to exclude votes in manual recount

By DJ Yap

FORMER Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, who is protesting his defeat in the last election, has asked poll and city officials to explain why some ballot boxes and ballots were "wet, or drenched with or soaked in water."

Atienza's camp filed an urgent motion asking the Commission on Elections (Comelec) to direct the Manila election officers, the city treasurer and the Manila ng Maynila management to explain why some ballot boxes and the ballots in their possession were discovered to be wet.

"In the course of the making of the ballots of the protested clustered precincts, a substantial number of these ballot boxes and their contents were found to be wet or drenched with or soaked in water," Atienza's lawyers said in an urgent motion they filed in the Comelec.

"We believe that this was no accident and clearly an attempt to sabotage our election protest on the part of some individuals who stand to gain should these ballots be set aside and excluded from the recount," Atienza said in a press statement.

A mayor for three terms, Atienza said more than 86 ballot boxes from the Second and fifth districts were wet and the ballots they contained were soaked.

He added that there was an urgent need to have the ballot boxes delivered to the Comelec to immediately start the manual recount of the "wet" ballots in the custody of the city government's Manila ng Maynila since May.

He also asked the Comelec's sixteen men, the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), its members and others who serve the manual recount.

"This request is prompted by an apparent act of some unscrupulous people to sabotage my election protest by damaging or impairing the ballot boxes and their contents after we recently discovered that some of the boxes and their contents are drenched with or soaked in water while inside the premises of the Harbor ng Maynila where they were deposited by the City Government of Manila," Atienza said in his letter to Dr Villa.

Atienza also cited the findings of the PPCRV regarding its random manual audit conducted by their Validation Team, which stated that they "could not identify the reasons for the large variances especially for the positions of mayor."

Mandaluyong to put up pilot memory program for public school students

By Nitz Calleja

THE CITY government of Mandaluyong plans to put up a pilot memory program for its public school students following the success of two Filipinos, one of them a resident of the city, who won top honors in the international memory olympics held last week in the United Kingdom.

Johann Randell Alerina and Robert Reanes, in a visit to Mandaluyong City Mayor Benhur Abalos yesterday, expressed interest in paying it forward and coaching students and potential "mental athletes" memorization techniques.

Alerina, a registered nurse from Mandaluyong and Reanes, a former "letrix" ("bet-taker" in cockfighting lingo) and a Manilite/City resident, earlier sought help from Abalos for their fare and accommodations in London. The two were the first representatives of the Philippines at the UK International Open Memory Championships.

Alerina won the silver medal for memorizing a deck of 52 cards within one minute and 20 seconds, beating the three-time UK memory champion.

Reanes, on the other hand, placed 13th by memorizing three decks of cards in perfect order, and 78th among eight in 20 minutes.

Abalos told reporters he would meet with city school officials to tackle details of the program and the possibility of incorporating this in their curriculum.

"If our children are already good in math and science, why needs (only) 7?" Abalos said.

Alerina and Reanes also promised to convene the Philippine Memory Sports Council, a nongovernment organization, that will train potential "mental athletes" and help public schools teachers and students enhance their memory.

"We want to reach out and share what we have. Right from the start, (it) has been our advocacy," said Reanes, who owns a memory clinic in Marikina City.

Hoping to bag the world title, the two will compete again at the World Memory Championships in Guangzhou, China, on Dec. 5.

HOMEWARD BOUND
A farmer herds his carabaos to their home near Marikina River after a long day

Prisoner found dead inside QC jail; police suspect foul play in death

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A PRISONER was found dead inside his detention cell at the Quezon City Jail in what police said could be a case of foul play.

PO2 Roland Belgica of the Quezon City Police District homicide section identified the victim as Samuel Silverio, 47, a resident of Barangay Kaligayahan, Novaliches, Quezon City.

The victim was found in a sitting position, a shoe lace looped around his neck. His ends had been tied together at the wooden beam of a bunk bed.

Belgica said the detainee was already dead when he was found at 5:30 a.m. inside Section 8 of the Quezon City Jail.

Silverio had been detained at the Quezon City Jail for more than a year on charges of acts of lasciviousness he allegedly committed last June 17, 2009, against the 10-year old daughter of his live-in partner.

Silverio was supposed to attend a scheduled hearing of his case yesterday morning.

According to other detainees, Silverio was last seen alive at 4:30 a.m. the same morning when he went to the rest room.

But police believe the detainee was killed.

"Based on evidences gathered there was foul play involved, the way the shoe lace was tied indicated that someone could have strangled the victim to death," he said.

He added that a body search of the inmate yielded a letter addressed to his common-law wife identifying the people who threatened to kill him, police said.

Belgica said they found in the victim's back pocket a wallet containing a letter written in Filipino, dated Sept. 2, 2010, addressed to his common-law wife.

"Ng mabasa mo itong sulat na ito ibig sabihin na napatay na ako at Jomel (When you read this letter this means that Jomel has killed me)," the letter read, referring to a fellow inmate named Jomel, who was the designated treasurer of his dorm.

The letter also contained his hope that the judge will release him after yesterday's hearing.

Included in the letter were expressions of disappointment with wife who, he said, had not visited him for more than a month.

Based on the assessment of the jail guard on duty, he said that upon noticing the victim's absence during the head count, he checked Silverio's cell and saw him with a loop around his neck, the jail guard said.

ABS-CBN told by QC court to answer Willie's complaint

By Julie M. Aurelio

A QUEZON City court has directed ABS-CBN Channel 2 to answer the civil complaint filed against the network by TV host Willie Revillame.

Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 84 told ABS-CBN Broadcasting Network to submit its answer to Revillame's complaint within 15 days upon receipt of the order.

Revillame, host of the TV station's noontime program "Wowowee," filed the complaint for judicial confirmation of rescission of contract with damages in the court.

He also asked to be awarded P11 million in damages, apart from asking the court to sustain that his contract with ABS-CBN had been terminated.

Restraint

The court summons remanded the network to observe restraint in filing a motion to dismiss and "instead allege the grounds thereof as defenses in the answer."

"If you fail to answer within the time aforesaid, this plaintiff will take judgment against you by default and may be granted the relief applied for in the complaint," said court clerk Mary Anne Plata-Bayuga.

The summons was sent on Aug. 31 by court sheriff Franklin Dato to Martin Os, chief legal counsel of ABS-CBN.

In August, Revillame lodged the complaint docketed as Q-10-67778 in which he alleged that the network suspended him without pay cancelled "Wowowee" unilaterally and disorganized his program from three hours daily to 10 hours weekly to just one hour weekly, or 17 hours less airtime.

Damages

Apart from confirming the termination of his contract, the petitioner asked the court to award him P1 million in moral damages, P1 million in exemplary damages, attorney's fees of P1 million, as well as P500,000 for litigation costs.

"Plaintiff has, for valid reasons, rescinded his contract with ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. However, ABS-CBN publicly disputed the rescission and claimed it was the aggrieved party. In the public, may insist the truth as to who really is the aggrieved party, who truly is at fault, who has been innocent, who acted with evident bad faith, and who breaks promises, plaintiff desires to have his rescission judicially confirmed."

Aggrieved party

Revillame said he had already ended his contract with ABS-CBN "for valid reasons" but the giant TV network had publicly disputed it, saying they were the aggrieved party.

He said that because of the show's cancellation, he would be deprived of his earnings from "in-show" product endorsements. He had become part of his compensation package.

His best was not good enough

ON TARGET
JOAQUIN
ZAMORA

THE COUNTRY will have more crises like those of the Luneta hostage-taking bloodbath and natural calamities such as Tropical Storm "Ondoy" but with the way the Luneta crisis was handled, don't expect too much from the government.

President Noy should fire all his officials who mishandled the crisis, including the Cabinet members who compose the trolls at the Malacañang Press Office.

He should choose their replacements based on their qualifications, not on their closeness to him.

One official who mishandled the crisis was appointed because he lauded the President how to shoot and facilitated the issuance of his licenses and permits.

* * *

"I did my best, I did my best," said Chief Supt. Rodolfo Magbitang, ground commander during the Aug. 23 hostage crisis that killed eight Hong Kong Chinese and brought so much shame to the country.

But your best was not good enough. Magbitang, instead of saying, "The buck stops here (with me)," blamed Manila Mayor Fred Lim during a Senate hearing for allegedly triggering the massacre of hostages.

Mayor Lim, according to Magbitang, ordered the action of SPO1 Gregorio Mendoza, brother of dismissed former top Rolando Mendoza, the hostage-taker.

The scuffle between the arresting officers and Emperio was seen by thousands on the live TV monitor and Global media Mendoza go ballistic and start shooting the hostages.

As Manila mayor, Lim was Magbitang's boss.

A milktoast or police commander always protects his boss, no matter the consequences.

If senior the PNP was not surrounded in saving Magbitang into a complete soldier.

* * *

Even now on, Quezon City Judge Jocelyn Solis Reyes will have to be careful in granting the defense motion for postponement in the Magbitang-Mendoza massacre trial.

She knows how the public will react to her every move that tends to favor the accused.

She knows that she could be lynched if she because partial to the accused.

* * *

One official in the Aquino administration allegedly collects P20 million long every month from gambling lords through some police regional directors.

This official just took over from his counterpart in the previous administration.

Most of the P20-million collection allegedly went to a Palace heavyweight in the Arroyo government.

But since P-Noy hates "dirty money," the official gets all the take.

* * *

Customs Commissioner Lito Alvarez is making it hard for his subordinates to federalize with smugglers.

When he ordered the filing of criminal charges against customs employees, along with the shipping line executives behind the smuggling, he sent a clear message that he meant business.

Alvarez won't go out of business filing charges against his subordinates but those who will be more. And more.

He should train his sights on two customs officials—a man and a woman who have a sexual liaison—who protect smugglers.

Learning opportunities for Valenzuela jail inmates

By Beverly T. Hatinalad

FIFTY inmates of the Valenzuela city jail will be given a chance to complete their elementary and/or high school studies while serving their jail terms through a program created by the Valenzuela City Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) and the Department of Education (DepEd).

In a statement, the city government of Valenzuela City said the program aims to prepare prisoners "for their eventual reintegration to their respective communities once they get out of jail upon completing their prison term."

Accreditation

Part of the DepEd's Alternative Learning System (ALS), the program includes conducting daily classes for 50 mostly long classes inside the Valenzuela City jail, and prepares participating inmates for the Accreditation and Equivalency examinations in 2011.

Successful examinees will receive certifications from the education secretary as proof of completing their secondary education.

Mobile teacher

According to the Valenzuela BJMP, the classes will be held Tuesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 11 noon at the City Jail Rehabilitation Center. The program will be handled by a DepEd mobile teacher.

The ALS is a DepEd program aimed at providing learning opportunities for out-of-school youths or they can be active participants to society once again.

The same program, said the Valenzuela City Information office, will soon be applied to city jail inmates who missed their education opportunities before they were jailed for criminal activities.

Educating the prisoners prepares inmates to reintegrate back to society by allowing them to take on permanent jobs, jail officials said.

For group or block screenings, call: Ankel Development Foundation at 622-1081 to 82 or email at ankelfoundation_13thday@gmail.com

OPENS SEPTEMBER 8, 2010

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Las Piñas fights dengue using innovative scheme

LAS PIÑAS Mayor Vergel Aguilar has ordered the strengthening of antidengue measures even as the city's health office (CHO) announced that the possible spread of the disease has been averted because of the preventive measures they have employed.

Aguilar said that while the CHO is capable of detecting and controlling possible dengue outbreaks, the conduct of regular disease surveillance, schoolmen and sanitation drives and logging operations to eliminate mosquitoes breeding sites in areas identified as critical are also important.

Dr. Elinor Natividad, City Health Office OIC, said dengue cases among Las Piñas residents significantly dropped compared to last year.

Natividad attributed the success of the city's dengue prevention campaign to the formation of at least 20 Lovebug (mosquito) fire composed of homeowners who are in charge designed to trap mosquito eggs and larvae which are examined to check the presence of dengue vector, Aedes aegypti.

Regular twice surveillance is regularly conducted by sanitarian inspectors. This way, the source of the dengue strain is hit right on target thus preventing its spread, Natividad added.

Installed three years ago, the system has been introduced in at least five barangays which registered a significant number of dengue cases like Pamplona 3, Pulang Lupa 2, Talon 5, and Zapote 3.

The CHO also coordinated with public school officials in putting up a Little Dengue Brigade among school children in their respective schools to spread information and awareness on dengue prevention and control.

Aguilar also urged everyone to observe cleanliness to ensure the eradication of the killer disease and prevent its spread not only in the city but in neighboring areas as well.

MetroBriefs

Driver, companion survive river ordeal

A DRIVER and his helper miraculously survived the raging waters caused by heavy rains in Rodriguez, Rizal, which swept away and rammed a 10-wheel dump truck they were driving across a river early Friday. Jerry Villanueva, 31, and Mar Abad, 28, clung to the truck for almost six hours after they were carried by the river's current around 1 a.m. The river in Barangay San Ramon is usually passable for heavy vehicles but it swelled after the heavy downpour overnight, Supt. Ronaldo Lacsamana, Rodriguez police chief told reporters. At around 7 a.m., barangay treasurers Willy Zelena and Elmer Manzanares noticed the two stranded men and a big basy. Lacsamana said. "It was really a lucky day. No one thought they could survive the current. The river rescuers were no divers. Without them, this two would be dead by now," he said. Evidence added that prior to the rescue, everyone was "directed to save the two saying it was "too dangerous" and they would be making their lives. The victims were brought to a hospital for treatment of slight injuries. Willy Cariaga

Navotas fire victims get MMDA aid

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has responded to the needs of 1,200 families in Navotas City who were left homeless following a big fire last week. Responding to Mayor John Rey Tiangco's appeal for assistance, the MMDA sent portable toilets and water tankers for the use of the fire victims. MMDA Chair Fransisco Tolentino also ordered the deployment of at least 40 construction workers to Barangays Bagumbayan North and Tangos North to provide temporary shelter for displaced residents who are now temporarily housed in evacuation centers. There are also plans to build 30 more members of the MMDA's Construction Equipment Management Office (CEMO) to help in the reconstruction efforts. There are already 76 members of Roadway Cleaning Group, Roadway Cleaning Operations Group and CEMO now working at the site. Tina E. Santos

3,000 kilos of rotten meat seized in QC mart

TWENTY tons equivalent to 3,000 kilos of rotten meat were seized during a surprise inspection conducted by police and health authorities at the Balintawak Market in Quezon City that started late evening on Thursday and lasted until dawn the following day. Senior Insp. Paul Cabiola of the Quezon City Police District's Intelligence Division (QCPD-DID), who led the operation, said confiscated were condemned vendors Dante Tayag, 40; Lesly dela Rosa, 48; and Marthoo Javier, 39. Other vendors on the "hot" meat shaded stood as they fled upon seeing the arrival of authorities. Cabiola said the three vendors were apprehended while selling their wares along Edsa-bis in front of the Balintawak Market. The police official said they also found rotten meat hidden under piles of garbage. Present during the operation were members of the Quezon City Hall 'x' While Unit's Services led by Dr. Anna Maria Cabal. Cabiola said that the three arrested vendors will be charged for violating the Meat Inspection Code, the Consumer's Code, the Sanitation Code, and the City's Revenue Code for operating without business permits. The confiscated meat was brought to the Payatas dump for proper disposal. Nancy C. Carvajal

ARELLANO HIGH REUNION

Officers of the Arellano High School Alumni Association were ordained to encounter said recently at the school grounds on 1 Arnaiz Street, Sta. Cruz, Manila. From left: Bradin Abad, president; Elizabeth Enrico, vice president; Rosario Cholella, secretary; Rose Cadiz, treasurer and Enrique Cosalin, public relations officer. Above will be holding its grand homecoming on Feb. 5, 2011, at the Paseo de Manila on Roxas Boulevard, Manila, with Class '61 as the golden jubilarians. For details, contact Cora David at tel. no. 7222833, Gloria Fernandez, 524-6820, Susan Marin, 6234617 and Dennis Bernardino at dennis_bernardino@hotmail.com.

Oil platform explodes off US coast

BOATS spray water to extinguish a fire on an oil and gas platform operated by Mariner Energy off the Louisiana coast on Sept. 3. REUTERS

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA—An oil platform explosion on Thursday in the Gulf of Mexico forced the crew to flee into the sea and threatened further damage to wells still recovering from the BP disaster.

The engulfed the offshore platform 160 km south of the Louisiana coast shortly after 9 a.m. and massive plumes of gray smoke billowed into the sky as rescuers walked to fish out the workers.

Photographs showed the 13-strong crew linking arms as they bobbed up and down in special flotation suits before being plucked out of the water by a nearby rig. Three US Coast Guard helicopters and a private charter chopper then transported them to a mainland hospital.

All escaped serious injury.

Workers told rescue crews they managed to dive down the wells before evacuating the platform and had spotted a thin sheen of oil spreading for about 1.6 km.

Crews from three firefighting vessels managed to extinguish the blaze after about five hours and the oil sheen was no longer visible by the time the Coast Guard arrived.

"The fire is out, and Coast Guard helicopters are now and vessels on scene have no reports of a visible sheen in the water," Coast Guard Eighth District chief Capt. Peter Troedson told reporters.

Coast Guard vessels and aircraft will continue surveillance of the area at first light on Friday to search for any possible sheen, the Coast Guard Eighth District said in a statement.

"Responders remain vigilant for any evidence of oil on the water," it added.

The incident ignited fresh anxieties of the oil and gas industry as the region struggles to recover from the BP disaster, the largest marine maritime oil spill.

"The BP disaster was supposed to be the wake-up call, but we hit the snooze button. Today the alarm went off again," said Michael Brune, executive director of the Sierra Club environmental group.

"The oil industry continues to roll against offshore, but it's become all too clear that the current approach to offshore drilling is simply too dangerous."

An estimated 4.9 million barrels of oil gushed out of a deepwater well that ruptured after the BP-leased Deepwater Horizon drilling rig exploded on April 20 off the coast of Louisiana.

The explosion killed 11 workers and it took nearly three months to cap the flow of oil gushing out of the well some 1,500 meters below the surface.

"How many times are we going to gamble with lives, environment and resources?" asked John Hoover, Greenpeace USA Ocean campaign director. "It's time we learn from our mistakes and go beyond oil."

The Mariner Energy platform that went ablaze on Thursday was operating in relatively shallow water, about 305 meters, and was not a drilling rig.

It had been producing approximately 1,400 barrels of oil and condensate and 260,115 cubic meters of natural gas per day, the Texas-based company said.

The White House said early in the day that it was monitoring the situation and reserved judgment until more information was available.

"We will continue to gather information as we respond, we obviously have response assets ready for deployment, should we receive reports of pollution in the water," White House spokesperson Robert Gibbs told reporters.

Gibbs declined to say whether the president believed inspections of rigs in the Gulf of Mexico were moving fast enough in the wake of the BP disaster.

It was also unclear how this incident would affect Obama's moratorium on offshore drilling, which is being challenged in the courts and has found harsh criticism from his political foes.

The House Energy and Commerce Committee, which has held a congressional investigation into the BP spill, sent a swift letter to Mariner Energy's chief requesting a briefing on the incident.

"In the wake of the BP catastrophe, this is an extremely disturbing event," said committee chair Henry Waxman, a Democrat.

"I call on the administration to immediately redouble safety reviews of all offshore drilling and platform operations in the gulf and take all appropriate action to ensure safety and protection of the environment."

The Shallow Water Energy Security Coalition insisted the fire was an "industrial accident" that could have occurred in any industrial sector...onshore or offshore." AFP

Rape victims in Congo raid now number over 240

KAMPALA, UGANDA—The number of rape victims from a four-day rebel attack in eastern Congo a month ago has risen to more than 240 and will likely go higher, aid officials said on Thursday.

Georgia Tsvetkoviene, a director of the aid group International Medical Corps, said investigators working in eastern Congo's North Kivu Province had so far "screened 242 cases individually, one by one."

On July 30, hundreds of members of Rwandan and Congolese rebel groups occupied villages in the Walikale region of North Kivu, assaulting their victims in groups of two to six.

Countering reports from the area that some victims were male rape victims, Tsvetkoviene said that all were female and that the youngest was 18 years old and the oldest 75.

Thousands of women, and hundreds of men, have been sexually assaulted by the war's two armed groups soaring in recent years.

Officials with the aid group have said that the rebels—members of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda and the Mai Mai...left the villages on Aug. 2, and that some that days a local administrator in the area to the west began.

Rebels from the same groups were suspected of attacking workers with the International Medical Corps on Wednesday. AFP

Iran forces surround Karroubi home

TEHRAN—Islamist militiamen and members of Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards surrounded the home of opposition leader Mehdi Karroubi on Friday to prevent him from joining an anti-government opposition Palestinian solidarity rally, his website said.

In last year's Quds (Jerusalem) Day rally in Tehran, supporters of Karroubi and fellow opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi staged demonstrations against hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his government.

"As of 8 a.m. today, Basiji (militiamen) and Sepahi (Guards) gathered in front of Karroubi's home and started creating unsettling prayers which are usually rushed on the day of tahsua (a Shiite religious

IRANIAN opposition leader Mehdi Karroubi. AFP

commemoration)," the semi-news.org website said.

"The aim of these people is to prevent Karroubi participating in the Quds Day rally."

The fresh siege of Karroubi's home came after several Basiji, some carrying guns, attacked the residential building late on Thursday for a second night in a row and wounded his chief bodyguard.

Several Basiji attacked the Karroubi's house and got inside the building after crushing down the door. The guards were obliged to fire in the air," the opposition leader's website reported earlier.

"The attackers opened fire and threw Molotov cocktails at the building," it said, adding: "Mr. Karroubi's chief bodyguard was badly beaten up and had to be taken to hospital."

The website said that the assault on Karroubi's house, which began shortly before midnight on Thursday, only ended when special forces arrived on the scene. AFP

Kim Jong-il appears to extend dynasty

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA—Kim Jong-il, the North Korean leader, is expected to convene a rare congress of the ruling Workers' Party becoming days to pave the way for his son to succeed him, a clear of political engineering that would be a first in the Communist world: cementing dynastic rule in a third generation.

Ahead of the national congress, the first ceremonial occasion of the party's delegates to decades, Kim's progeny candidate is locally reminding North Koreans that their leaders owes its existence to Kim's father, Kim Il-sung, who was a leader of anti-Japanese guerrillas in Manchuria in the early 20th century.

The meeting, like all political events in the North, will be secret, and even the precise starting date has not been publicly announced. North Korea has said that the party's "highest leading body" will be elected at the meeting, beyond that, the agenda is unknown, and it is unclear how the expected promotion of Kim's third son, Kim Jong-un, will be presented. Kim's trip last year to China, North Korea's main patron and supporter, already followed the announcement of the meeting, has fueled speculation that a succession transition is under way.

"This party meeting will be a coming out party for Kim Jong-un," said Peter Hayes, a North Korea expert at Nova University in Japan.

Little is known about the son, believed to be in his late 20s, and no photos or public sightings of him have been reported since he attended a Swiss school as a teenager. After his father's stroke in 2008, however, his grooming as heir picked up speed. He has accompanied Kim on inspection tours and military units and is getting policy briefings, according to South Korean intelligence officials who monitor developments in the North. NYT

Condemned German author opens immigration debate

BERLIN—When a German banker and former government official spoke publicly about a "Jewish gene," when he attacked Islam as a source of violence and warned development and when he espoused genetic theories that evoked the flight of the Nazi past, the political leadership knew quickly condemned him as racist and called for him to be fired.

But the banker, Thilo Sarrazin, an executive with the central bank, or Bundesbank, and a former Berlin finance minister, has not emerged as the marginalized hate-monger that the initial condemnation suggested. His book, "Germany Does Away With Itself," which laments the growing number of Muslim immigrants, contending that they are "destroying [their" society, was released Monday and is already in its fourth printing, with sales expected to surpass 1,500,000 copies, according to his publisher.

Sarrazin has set off a painful public discussion here that has highlighted one of the nation's most vexing challenges: how to overcome what is widely seen as a failed immigration policy that over decades has done little to support and help integrate the nearly 10 percent of the population who have an immigrant background. It is a policy that has also stoked anti-Islamic sentiment and hostility.

The attention of Sarrazin's book and his unrepentant posture have also provoked something less tangible but perhaps more troublesome for policymakers here eager to keep the radical right from gaining a foothold as they have in other parts of Europe. Under the cover of speaking truth to power, Sarrazin has tried to legitimize hate speech, his critics say.

One of the most telling signs of the growing distance between native Germans and immigrants, officials have said, is the observation that the grandchildren of immigrants are less likely to integrate into German society and less likely to even apply for citizenship compared with members of previous generations, creating an ethnic underclass of unemployment. Residents from immigrant families are twice as likely as ethnic Germans to be unemployed.

"This issue is now more important for Germany than the economy," said Wolfgang Schäuble, the current senior adviser to the previous chancellor, Gerhard Schroeder, and the head of December Bank's International Forum.

Schäuble argues that Sarrazin has done his country a favor by forcing the topic to the top of the political agenda and courting through the barriers of political correctness.

"The condemnation of his book is an automatic reflex of a generation raised after Hitler," he said.

Four more who found his approach offensive said that Sarrazin had "addressed a problem that will remain long after the waves of outrage have subsided: the successful integration of parts of the Muslim minority in Germany, or at least of thoroughly large parts of it," said an article in the center-left newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung.

In a newspaper interview published the day before the book was released, Sarrazin also spoke of a Jewish gene, a reference to recent studies showing that Jews from many parts of the world from the ancestral population that lived in the Middle East long ago. He was criticized by everyone, including the chancellor, Angela Merkel. NYT

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Intramuros Complex Reception
DOLE-NCR Building, 2617 Westgate St.
Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATIONS FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMITS (AEPS)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with the Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits:

Name and Address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Undertaking	Position
FORTUNE INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION		General Manager
LEY CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CORP.		Technician
LEY CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CORP.		Technician
LEY CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CORP.		Technician
SUBSEA SYSTEMS EQUIPMENT (PHILIPPINES), INC.		Consulting Manager
LEY CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CORP.		Technician
LEY CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CORP.		Technician
METRO MINERAL RESOURCES CORP.		Business Development Manager
GLOBAL MARKETSOURCE PHILS. INC.		Manager
MACH FLORAS SOLUTIONS, INC.		Vice President
PHANGUARD INTERNATIONAL TRADE, INC.		Technical Staff
IMMIGRATION HON KIA-JAN MARIA		Area Officer
SYKES ASIA, INC.		Operations Director
L.E. SOLIS SHIPPING AGENCIES, INC.		Executive Consultant
HARLEY SUPPORT CORPORATION		Consultant
GELEGAT CORPORATION - BRANCH OFFICE		Chief Executive Officer
JAPAN PACIFIC EXPRESS CORPORATION		Asst. General Manager
SEAMARKERS INC.		Creative Director

If you have any comments/objection to the above-mentioned applications, please communicate with the Regional Director.

ROMULO G. ASUNCION
Regional Director

The WORLD

Editor: Lorenzo B. Queco

More peace talks for Israel, Palestinians

WASHINGTON—Israeli and Palestinian leaders have cleared the first hurdle in what promises to be difficult negotiations, vowing to try to settle core differences within a year and meet every two weeks.

In opening scene from hours of talks in Washington on Thursday, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton acknowledged the "suspicion and skepticism" feeding up to the meetings after years of previous US-mediated efforts failed and failed to help resolve the decades-old Middle East conflict.

"I know the decision to sit at this table was not easy," said Clinton, flanked on either side by Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in a chandelliered room at the state department.

"Thank you for your courage and commitment," she added.

The next round of talks was set for Sept. 14-15 in Egypt, possibly in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh. More negotiations are due every two weeks after that, after the leaders agreed they could achieve a peace deal within a year.

After weighty symbolism and lofty rhetoric on Wednesday at the White House with President Barack Obama, Netanyahu and Abbas finally got down to business, presenting their opening demands.

Before the talks began, Netanyahu told Abbas that recognizing his country as a Jewish state and ensuring its security were required before a broader agreement could be sealed.

But recognizing Israel as the Jewish homeland would be a difficult political proposition for Abbas, as it could undermine the right of refugee claims of Palestinian refugees who left or fled Israel when it was created in 1948.

"A real peace must take into account the genuine security needs of Israel," Netanyahu said, following two attacks on settlers in as many days in the occupied West Bank claimed by the Islamist movement Hamas, which staunchly opposes the talks and Abbas's US-backed Palestinian Authority.

Abbas appeared conciliatory saying: "We consider security as reminded and vital both for us and for you, and we will not accept that anyone commits any act that would harm your security."

The Palestinian leader said investigations into the shootings that killed four Israeli settlers on Tuesday were progressing.

But he also made it his demands on Jewish settlements.

"We call on the Israeli government to move forward with its commitment to end all settlement activity and completely lift the embargo over the Gaza Strip," Abbas said.

Israel tightly controls access and egress from the Hamas-run Gaza Strip.

Although Netanyahu and Abbas presented to rank resolutions to the core issues that have bedeviled past peace attempts, neither leader addressed the unanswered issues of whether Israel would extend a moratorium on settlement building in the West Bank during negotiations.

Before going behind closed doors, the two leaders shook hands, and Abbas appeared to give Netanyahu a thumbs up. AFP

SPEECH Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (left) shakes hands with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas (right) as US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton looks on in Washington on Sept. 2 AFP/JIM WATSON

Two-thirds of New Yorkers want mosque moved

NEW YORK—Two-thirds of New York City residents want a planned Muslim community center to move or scrap it relocated to a less controversial site further from Ground Zero in Lower Manhattan, including many who say they favor the project, according to a New York Times poll.

The poll underscores Obstacles support for the 13-story complex, which opponents said would promote moderate Islam and interfaith dialogue, is tepid in its backing.

Nearly nine years after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks ignited a wave of anxiety about Muslims, many in the country's biggest and arguably most cosmopolitan city still have an uneasy relationship with Islam. One-fifth of New Yorkers acknowledged openly toward Muslims. Thirty-three percent said they compared with other US citizens, Muslims were more sympathetic to terrorists. And nearly 60 percent said their friends had negative feelings toward Muslims because of 9/11.

Overall, 70 percent of those surveyed oppose the project's construction two blocks north of the World Trade Center site, even though a majority believe that the developers have the right to do so. Thirty-five percent have it.

Opposition is most intense in the 9/11 center's vicinity—54 percent in the Bronx—but it is even strong in Manhattan, considered a bastion of religious tolerance, where 41 percent are against it.

The poll was conducted on Aug. 27-31 with 892 adults. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

It suggested that Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, the center's most ardent and public defender, has yet to rally public opinion around the issue. Asked if they approved or disapproved of how he had handled the subject, city residents were evenly split.

While a majority said politicians in New York should take a stand on the issue, most disapprove of those outside the city weighing in. Those disapproving include Sarah Palin, among others, have failed to rally opposition to the center. NYT

British foreign secretary denies gay rumors

HAGUE

LONDON—In a country that is no stranger to sex scandals in politics, the latest flare-up has been one of the strangest of all.

Most notably, it centers on fast-rising political scientist only because the man at the center of it, Foreign Secretary William Hague, made a plain-vanilla declaration, with the support of many of his colleagues. That there had been no scandal at all.

Hague, the leading minister in the coalition government of Prime Minister David Cameron, brought the issue into the glare of national attention when he issued a statement on Wednesday seeking to end "rumours and baseless speculation" prompted by a political blogger reasserting his relationship with a 25-year-old male adviser at the foreign office.

Hague, who is 49 and a former leader of the Conservative Party, is married, and his statement centered mainly on the "grossly traumatic and painful experience" he and his wife, Ffion, have had in attempting to start a family and how the overuse of multiple miscarriages had brought the couple close to despair. In the statement, he rejected "any suggestion that I have ever been involved in a relationship with a man."

Complicating the story, the side-to-side, Christopher Myers, resigned from his job and disappeared from public view as Hague's statement was made public, leaving it to Hague to say that Myers was quitting because of "the pressure on his family from the news and malicious allegations made about him" by bloggers and in gossip of Whitehall, the center of government in the heart of London.

The flurry last weekend began when a tabloid newspaper, The Mail on Sunday, published a photograph of Hague, in baseball cap, dark sunglasses and blue jeans, laughing as he walked out a London street late one night with Myers. A political blogger who says the pseudonym Guido Fawkes, a play on the name of Guy Fawkes, a nineteenth-century rebel who failed in a plot to blow up Parliament in 1605, went up the issue by reporting that Hague and Myers had on more than one occasion shared a hotel room during campaigning for the May general election—what brought the Guardian government to power.

In recent years, a number of lawmakers in all three major parties—the Conservatives, Labour and the Liberal Democrats—have declared themselves to be gay, and several gay men have served as Cabinet ministers. The Cameron government had been in power only a week when one of the most prominent Liberals in the coalition Cabinet, David Laws, resigned in a controversy that centered on parliamentary expenses claims that he had made for a London home that he shared with a gay partner.

The issue in that case was not that Laws was gay, although he said so he resigned that he had been financed to avoid his sexuality but allegations that the expense claims were improper. Last month, he returned to the new government, Crispin Blunt, who is a Conservative, supported fellow lawmakers with an announcement that he was leaving his marriage because he wished to acknowledge that he was gay.

In his statement, Hague was unusually candid about his marriage, a step that appeared to trouble many of his fellow lawmakers, who said he had overstepped the principle of family privacy in his response to what the speculation.

"We have encountered many difficulties and suffered multiple miscarriages, and indeed are still grieving for the loss of a pregnancy this summer," he said. NYT

DLSU Henry Sy, Sr. Hall groundbreaking held

De La Salle University commenced the campus-wide Centennial Renewal Plan with the groundbreaking ceremony of the Henry Sy, Sr. Hall held on August 9 at the University football field.

Named in honor of the Philippine retail magnate, the Henry Sy, Sr. Hall will be the cornerstone of the Centennial Renewal Plan, a long-term redevelopment master plan to rationalize the whole campus setup and respond to the current and future needs of the university.

The 15-story modern and eco-friendly building will house various academic service units, study areas, learning spaces, and select offices.

It will also be home to the Learning Commons — a central hub that will serve as the intellectual crossroads for studying in the university. More than a repository of books and reference materials, the Learning Commons is envisioned to be a place of connection where community members can relax, commune, and hold official university activities.

Renowned architectural firm I.M. Lucas Partners designed the Henry Sy, Sr. Hall. The building is likened to a habitable tree as its form is reminiscent of a group of trees sitting within a forest clearing. This concept represents DLSU's continuous and growing role in Philippine education, as well as the institution's stand on environmental responsibility and sustainability.

Photo shows the donor (middle) with his sons, SM Prime Holdings President Hans Sy (second from left) and SM Supermarket President Herbert Sy (third from left), together with some members of the BoT-board of trustees and administration, and LM Lucas Partners representatives. Also gracing the event was Viel Aquino Dee (front row, fourth from left), representing the family of the late President Corazon Aquino

DLSU community members and distinguished guests witness the groundbreaking of the building that will serve as the cornerstone of the Centennial Renewal Plan

IN THIS ISSUE
- Lopez unit pays P1.28B for BacMan plant in Bicol/B2
- Bernanke takes blame for Lehman muddle/B3

Editor Raul G. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Hontiveros

BUSINESS

IN THIS ISSUE
- Cebu Pacific sees 10 million passengers in '10/B6

New airports, LRT lines set in 2011

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

Sept. 1, 2010

44.69

STOCK MARKET

Sept. 1, 2010

68.2

Stocks soar to 32-month high

PHILIPPINE STOCKS soared to their best level in nearly three years yesterday on renewed global risk-taking and strong corporate earnings, lured investor foreign investors into the local bourse.

The main share Philippine Stock Exchange Index rallied 1.88 percent or 68.2 points to close at a 32-month high of 3,734.13, extending gains for the fourth straight day. The new the highest finished by the index since Dec. 7, 2007, when it closed at 3,776.28.

Value turnover was heavy at P7 billion, suggesting a strong conviction in the upswing.

Ten gainers were across the board led by blue banking firms, mining and property counters benefitted most as their underlying asset values rose more than 6 percent. There were nearly three gainers for every decliner.

Driving general expectations of value-laden or takeover investment for this week due to positive surprise in Wall Street. The economic has climbed nearly 11 percent. Since the start of the year, the PSEi—one of the best performing in the region—has gained 882.32 points or about 22 percent.

"We are seeing general optimism on global markets which helped push our stock market higher today. Foreign investors continued to be net investors at P1.78 billion, accounting for 49.7 percent of total turnover," PSE president and chief executive Hermogenes Esguerra said.

"The market is very strong. There is so much foreign buying," said Light Equities Inc. president Joseph Bonoan.

He said the dip seen by the market last week after the bloody hostage taking crisis in Manila attracted bargain hunters as such smooth investors had somehow eliminated its fear.

"The market is still undervalued," Bonoan said.

Although local stock prices have gone up sharply since last year, so have corporate earnings expectations.

On the other hand, local banks across this globe have dramatically fallen since mid-2008 as country banks expect investors policy to consider the adverse re-

STORIES B1

Projects to be offered to private sector

By Nancel W. Domingo

INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS and new light rail projects will make up part of a list of 10 priority projects that will be implemented in 2011 through government partnerships with the private sector.

Budget Secretary Florencio B. Abad said yesterday that aside from key tourism-related infrastructure, the short list would also include general public works and agricultural facilities like irrigation.

"The government is looking forward to generating P180 billion to P300 billion in PPP (public-private partnership) undertakings" next year, Abad said.

He added that an investment council spot, Malacañang had called on its proposed "Bottom Budget for 2011" a total of P21 billion on a strategic support fund for PPP projects.

The amount is distributed equally among the departments of Public Works and Highways, Transportation and Communications, and Agriculture.

Abad said the strategic support would cover right-of-way purchases, horizontal land development and other facilities meant to encourage private investors to undertake public infrastructure projects with the government.

He said the short list, which would be culled from an initial list of 70 projects, includes airport or Panglao Island off Bohol and another in Davao, Albay.

Abad said the list also included the improvement of the Laguindingan airport in Misamis Oriental as well as an integrated facility in Subic-Zambales and related lines of the Light Rail Transit system.

The budget chief added that aside from the support fund, the proposed 2011 budget set aside P650 million under the DPWH, DOTC and the National Economic and Development Authority for capacity-building to enable agencies to conduct feasibility studies and development studies for PPP projects.

He said proposed projects for PPP eligibility would be subject to the evaluation of the Investment Coordination Committee, of which the budget secretary is a member.

"We look forward to working with Congress to make sure that PPP will really work to our benefit," Abad said.

President Aquino announced the PPP scheme during his inauguration speech on June 30.

The president said he envisions the government to be transformed by a yearning based, global, which many blame on the economic rollercoaster by the issuance of Internal Revenue and of Customs that, in turn, were being caused by rampant tax evasion and smuggling.

With borrowings covering the big budget shortfalls in the past, a sizable part of the annual appropriations of the government goes to servicing these debts.

The Philippines has lagged behind its neighbors in attracting investors due to the country's poor infrastructure facilities.

FILIPINO–CHINESE BUSINESSMEN VISIT MEDIA

The Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc., led by its president, Alfonso Uy (second from left), pays a courtesy visit to Economic Planning Secretary Cayetano Paderanga Jr. (right). They discussed a broad range of areas related to socioeconomic development, including public-private partnerships, trade between China and the Philippines, foreign investments, agriculture, labor and the upcoming Medium-term Philippine Development Plan. With Uy are (from left) FFCCCII vice presidents Tee Ching, Angel Ngo and Henry Lee Boo Liong.

Toyota gives P80-M reforestation grant to RP

By Abigail L. Ho

JAPANESE AUTO giant Toyota Motor Corp. is donating 150 million yen (P79.6 million) to fund the second phase of the Philippine Pollinations sustainable reforestation project in Cagayan.

At the signing of the memorandum of understanding for the project yesterday, Toyota executive vice president Takahiro Fuse said the new grant was part of the company's commitment to give something back to its host nations.

"But also to extend the success of the project's first phase, which ran from September 2007 to July this year. Toyota provided 200 million yen (P106 million) to fund that phase.

"We enthusiastic our strong support for these activities to serve our friends and neighbors here. This commitment will continue to ensure our providing our customers here with products and services of superior quality," he said in a speech.

"We will continue striving to earn the confidence of customers here in the Philippines. We will continue working to provide quality products at reasonable prices. We will be able to do more to contribute to society, and we will be sensitive to social needs," he added.

The first phase of the reforestation project involved the establishment of a forest exclusively for harvesting firewood for fuel as well as the promotion of the planting of mango trees, and other fruit-bearing trees.

During the three-year duration of the project, 1,772 hectares of the Dinadiawan protected landscape and seascape were reforested and planted with around 1.36 million trees.

According to Pinatubo project coordinator Hyuga Okuyama, the reforestation was heavily involved with managing and maintaining the planted trees, consid-

TOYOTA B6

Banks urged to fund infra projects

By Michelle V. Rivera

FUNDING. BANGKO SENTRAL GOVERNOR AMANDO TETANGCO JR. SAYS BANKS SHOULD BE WILLING TO LEND TO PRIVATE ENTITIES THAT WANT TO MAKE SUCH INVESTMENTS.

THE COUNTRY'S finance chief has called on the banking sector to support the government's development agenda by funding public infrastructure projects.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said he would meet with members of the Bankers Association of the Philippines (BAP) to urge its members to expand their loan portfolio by investing infrastructure projects being pushed by the government.

"We want banks to play a major role in the public private partnership (PPP) program," Purisima said. Under the PPP program, the government seeks the private sector to invest in public infrastructure projects. Banks are asked specifically to lend to private entities that want to make such investments.

Banks are considered as a better position to help government finance key infrastructure projects given their prevailing liquidity.

Deposits of banks with the system's deposit insurance agency PDIC totaled P2.6 trillion as of end-June, while those containing 200 100% a month ago equal to P126.66 billion in their bills. But those containing 500 600% the reduction would be much higher at P228.26.

According to Montes, the decline in the electricity bills this month was due to a drop in the prices of electricity that the utility sources from its independent power producers (IPPs) and the wholesale electricity spot market (WESM). These decreases had also offset the higher cost of power bought from the state-owned National Power Corp. last month.

Montes disclosed that WESM prices fell more than 60% a kilowatt hour (kWh) to P5.95 in August, which contributed largely to the September generation charge reduction.

The costs of the IPPs, in requested tariffs, registered an average decline of 18.2 centavos a kWh to P4.48 a kWh.

Of the power firm's 18% Quezon Power Philippines Ltd. (QPPL) registered the biggest reduction of almost P1 a kWh. The rates of Meralco's two other IPPs—the 1,000-megawatt Sta. Rita and the 500-MW San Lorenzo natural gas-fired power plants—also declined by 1.23 and 4.72 centavos a kWh, respectively.

The distribution utility explained that the reduction in IPP rates was largely due to the higher capacity factor for all three IPPs, resulting in lower fixed cost per kWh.

Meanwhile, the decline in IPP and WESM prices helped offset Napocor's rate increase of P1.68 a kWh, which brought its effective rate to P4.84 a kWh.

According to Montes, the Napocor rate increase was

HEADLINES B1

Meralco customers to pay lower power bills this month

By Arra B. Benosa

CONSUMERS OF power distributor Manila Electric Co. can expect their electricity bills to go down by 60.4 centavos a kilowatt-hour (kWh) this month as the basic generation charge fell to P5.45/kWh a kWh.

The reason for a residential customer consuming 200 kWh a month will have a bill reduced by P66.45 this September, while those consuming 200 kWh a month can expect a P120.90 decrease in their bills. But those consuming 500 kWh, the reduction would be much higher at P228.26.

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HEADLINES B1

Gokongwei unit eyes 30 budget hotels in next 5 years

By Doris C. Dantes

LODGE OPERATOR Robinsons Land Corp. plans to roll out a total network of 30 budget hotels over the next five years, partly through franchising, as part of its target to eventually operate the biggest hotel chain in the Philippines.

At the grand opening of RLC's pilot value hotel Gokotels.ph in Ophiuchus Plaza along Edsa in Mandaluyong City yesterday, RLC president Frederick Go told reporters that franchising would play a significant role in the nationwide expansion of value hotel chain Gokotels.ph. He said core private investors, for instance, can save looking at first class within Greater Metro Manila to fold into the new chain under a franchising arrangement.

"They build the facility. We operate the facility. We provide the systems. We provide the brand, management and online booking systems, which is very crucial," Go said.

Gokotels.ph, which operates under the motto "A Place for Every Kuya," seeks to offer clean, affordable, secure and strategically located but no-frills hotel rooms mostly through online booking.

Pricing is variable, similar to the system used by RLC's affiliate online Cebu Pacific, wherein the rates are cheaper the earlier a client books. Typically, the price of a room a night will range from a low of P1000 a night to P1,800.

Since the soft opening of the pilot budget hotel in Mandaluyong River yesterday only, Go said that there were only very little advertising, the first Gokotels.ph saw big an occupancy rate of 90 percent. The hotel is even sometimes getting bills booked and thus unable to accommodate walk-in clients, he added.

"Due to the high demand for excellent accommodation, Gokotels.ph is now welcoming offers from parties who are interested to franchise or sell their land," Gokotels.ph general manager Liz Fergusson said.

A potential hotel property should have at least 100 rooms to be economically viable, Fergusson said.

Aside from those that can be added to the Gokotels.ph network through franchising, Go said RLC itself would build more hotels, mostly near its existing Robinsons malls across the country.

"We now have 30 malls. Ther-

CONTINUED B2

PILOT Gokotels.ph on Edsa in Mandaluyong City

Lopez unit pays P1.28B for BacMan plant in Bicol

By Amy R. Remo

BACMAN GEOTHERMAL Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of geothermal holder Energy Development Corp., yesterday paid the government P1.28 billion for the 150-megawatt Bacon-Manito geothermal power plant in Bicol.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, EDC said the payment made to the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) represented the full amount of the bid price it had offered during an auction held earlier this year.

The BacMan facilities were also turned over to the Lopez-led subsidiary yesterday, following the payment and the successful completion of the conditions required in the Asset Purchase Agreement (APA).

"The acquisition of Mahanagdong-1 Corp.'s geothermal power plants is one of our major platforms for future growth. While the turnover of the BacMan power plant, we are now fully integrated across the geothermal value chain. This vertical integration will result in synergies and more efficient operations," said EDC president and CEO Richard B. Tantoco.

The acquisition of the BacMan geothermal facilities boosted EDC's current portfolio of geothermal power generation assets to 1,109 MW.

"Our main focus now is to rehabilitate these plants and restore capacity and reliability factors to 100 percent to add clean, reliable and much needed power to the Luzon grid," Tantoco added.

The BacMan plant package is composed of two steam-gathering systems in Albay and Sorsogon. EDC currently provides the steam for these facilities.

The BacMan 1 geothermal facility has two 65-MW turbines, built-in, commissioned in 1993. BacMan II also has two 40-MW units.

Aside from the BacMan facilities, EDC also acquired from the government the 112.5-MW Tongonan and 192.5-MW Palinpinon geothermal plants, which were auctioned in PSALM's favor.

EDC's other geothermal power generating assets include the Bulalo Leyte plants, consisting of the 125-MW Upper Mahiao, 232.5-MW Mahanagdong, 300-MW Malitbog and 51-MW optimization plants; the 106-MW Nasulo-an 1 and 2 plants in Kidapawan, Cotabato; and the 49-MW Northern Negros geothermal plant in Negros Occidental.

EDC takes over facility; PSALM gets payment

Pilmico eyes expansion

By Kaa T. Olchondra

ABOITIZ-LED Pilmico Foods Corp. has just increased the feed milling capacity of its plant in Bajao but is already considering whether it should gear up for another round of expansion.

Probably by 2012 we may be at almost 90 percent capacity," Pilmico president and CEO Ishaw M. Navarro said in a hearing, referring to the expanded Bajao feed mill.

He said the growth would come from improved feed sales and demand from the company's own swine business.

"We will make a decision next year if we should prepare for additional capacity for 2013," Navarro said.

Pilmico completed the P120-million expansion of its Bajao feed mill last July. That involved the construction of a second production line.

The new production line has an estimated annual capacity of 120,000 metric tons, increasing total production by 50 percent.

The feed manufacturing business contributed about 8 percent of the income of Aboitiz Equity Ventures and helped cush profitability despite challenges in the group's integrated business.

For the first half of 2010, Pilmico earlier told shareholders contributed P867 million to AEV's income, up by 105 percent year on year. The AEV group booked P14.22 billion in net income for the first six months of the year.

Aboitiz group bullish on shipping industry

By Paolo G. Montecillo

CEBU-BASED Aboitiz family is more confident of the prospects for its shipping business this year with economic conditions improving and fuel prices stabilizing.

Erramon Aboitiz, president and CEO of the Aboitiz Holding company, Aboitiz Equity Ventures, said the company plans to continue acquiring more efficient vessels to replace older ones to keep costs down and provide better services to clients.

He said the company's shipping subsidiary—Aboitiz Transport System Corp.—has seen an increase in cargo volumes and passenger ridership, despite the competition from budget airlines, since the start of the year.

"We're seeing volumes go up, and fuel prices have stabilized. Whenever there's volatility, it's a problem for us because fuel is our largest expense," Aboitiz said in an interview.

So far this year, he said cargo and passenger volumes have increased on a double-digit rate over year-ago levels, owing largely to the growing economy.

"It's really positive when the economy is growing because then money flows are more open to being invested around the country," Aboitiz said.

Over 60 percent of the company's revenue comes from its freight operations. The rest comes from its passenger business.

The company's freight fleet now operates under the brand "Sulpicio," while its passenger brands are SuperFerry, SuperCat and Cebu Pacific.

As part of efforts to streamline operations, AEV earlier folded its two subsidiaries engaged in sea freight businesses. All of AEV cargo operations are now consolidated under Aboitiz.

AEV earlier said it posted a P192.2-million net loss for the six-month period ending in June.

This is a reversal from the profit of P496.2 million recorded in the first half of last year.

The losses, the company said, were a result of the "extensive" drydocking of ships for maintenance.

The vessels will be back in operation by the end of the year. For the next 30 months until it has scheduled maintenance, AEV expects to maintain the earnings potential of its fleet," the company said.

Stocks soar . . .

From page B1

and 0.5% to 33 bid until a unit.

Despite some profit-taking on telcom giant PLDT, the market surged as investors snapped up shares of SM Investments, Ayalaland, EDC, Aboitiz, DMCI Holdings, MWC, Megaworld, Filinvest Land, Universal Robina, Philex Mining, BPI, First Holdings, Rustan Holdings and Alliance Global Group.

Overnight, the closely watched Dow Jones Industrial Index was up by another 59.03 points or 0.59 percent to 10,330.10 on broad-based buying.

"Global investment continued to be positive, with Europe and Asia benefiting from a strong close on Wall Street the previous night," said investment bank Credit Agricole CIB. Boost C. Bordian

Banks urged to fund . . .

From page B1

projects.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. earlier said that given their ample holdings, banks may also set up their own pool of funds to directly invest in public infrastructure projects.

Pantaleon said the economic team was strongly pursuing the PPP program, given the government's fiscal constraints. He said the private sector should be tapped for short investments to help sustain a strong growth for the economy despite budget limitations of the government.

For this year, the government expects a budget deficit of as much as P325 billion.

Bautista also revealed that the government is spending for infrastructure and only about 3 percent of the country's gross domestic product, below the 5-percent average for Southeast Asian countries.

Economic officials and private sector were being urged to invest more actively in infrastructure projects that would help improve and boost growth of tourism and agriculture and that would enhance military and transportation.

Toyota gives . . .

From page B1

ing as a 40-percent owned unit of the town.

For the second phase, which will run from August this year to July 2013, another 726 hectares will be converted to complete the envisioned 2,000-hectare township project.

During this period, the project proponents will also devise a sustainable system that will allow the community to continue rehabilitation activities at the end of the project term and even without external grants.

Gokongwei unit eyes . . .

From page B1

annually, or value at least 10 hectares that we could build it on," Ong said.

The target of having a 40-hotel network over five years is even a "conservative" target, given a packed expansion strategy through franchising.

"We want to be the biggest hotel operators in a few years," Ong said.

By 2011, new Robinsons malls are planned to rise in Bacolod and Dumaguete. By 2012, new malls are seen in Palawan, Iloilo, Cebu and Tacloban. By 2013, new hotels are targeted to rise in Dumaguete, Boracay, Iloilo, Zamboanga and General Santos. The plan to set up a local hotel chain even carries Cebu Pacific Air too, Ong said.

Meralco customers to pay lower power bills this month

From page B1

brought by increases in its fuel and purchased power cost adjustment (FPPCA) of P1.0857 a kWh and fuses adjustment of 25.35 centavos a kWh.

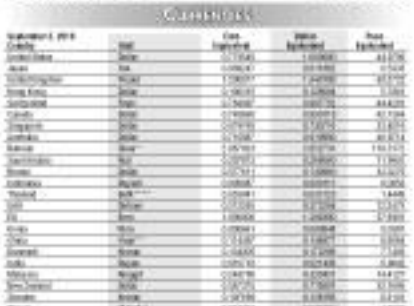
Since March this year, rates created support has been implementing an automatic rate adjustment mechanism, or which it could adjust its rates based on the actual cost of its fuel and power purchases and movements in the foreign exchange rate.

The distribution utility added that the drop in electricity rates this month reversed the upward trend over the past three months, with the kilowatt of 68.4 centavos effecting by 18 centavos the cumulative increase of 58.4 centavos from June to August.

The generation charge may be 8.4 centavos a kWh in June, then by 5.8 centavos in July and by 44.2 centavos in August following a dramatic surge in WESM prices.

Rhodes estimated that the generation charge may currently a possible change and did not seem to fluctuate.

It explained that the cost reduction by said by the generating companies could move from month to month based on many factors beyond its control, among them fuel prices, operating condition of the power plants and WESM prices.



Bernanke takes blame for Lehman muddle

Fed left impression it could have saved institution

WASHINGTON—U.S. Federal Reserve Chief Ben Bernanke said he was partly to blame for leaving the wrong impression that the central bank could have saved Lehman Brothers from failure in 2008.

Bernanke, testifying on Thursday before a congressional commission examining the causes of the worst financial crisis since the 1930s, said he thought it "very likely" the investment bank was insolvent and lacked sufficient collateral to borrow enough from the central bank to avert collapse.

But he said he kept clear views to himself, to congressional testimony given just days after Lehman's September 2008 bankruptcy because he was worried that such comments might have spooked already panicky financial markets.

"I regret not being more straightforward there because clearly it has supported the mistaken impression that in fact we could have done something we could not have done," he said.

The Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission wrapped up a two-day session on Thursday focusing on "too big to fail" firms whose disorderly collapse could destabilize the global economy.

On Wednesday, commission Chairman Phil Angelides questioned whether politics had played a role in the decision not to bail out Lehman Brothers, citing audio showing Fed officials betting over bets the media might portray a taxpayer-funded rescue of a Wall Street firm. Lehman's bankruptcy triggered widespread panic, hastening the worst global recession since World War Two.

"It was with great reluctance and sadness I concluded that there was no other option" but to let Lehman fail, Bernanke said. "The only way we could have saved Lehman would have been by breaking the law, and I'm not sure I'm authorized to use taxpayer resources for the Federal Reserve and for one system of laws."

The central bank serves as the lender of last resort for banks in financial difficulty, but it is required to lend against good collateral. Bernanke said the "unanimous opinion" of the New York Fed lawyers and leadership that Lehman did not meet that requirement.

The financial crisis, which began with failing US home mortgages, led to the bankruptcy, bailout or government takeover of large financial firms, including Bear Stearns, Lehman Brothers, Fannie and Washington Mutual. Reuters

FEDERAL Reserve chair Ben Bernanke (second from left) gets on an elevator with staff after testifying at a hearing of the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission in Capitol Hills Washington DC. The commission called Bernanke and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation chair Sheila Bair to testify about the current financial crisis and the concept of "too big to fail." AP

Dollar-laden China warns of depreciation

BEIJING—China on Friday offered a rare glimpse into its foreign exchange reserves, confirming that Beijing was considerably alarmed at dollars, while a related banker said the mountain of cash could face depreciation risks.

The Chinese government's currency agency, the State Administration of Foreign Exchange, said it had roughly $2.45 trillion, or $2.45 trillion, at the end of June, 26 percent in euros, 5 percent in pounds and 3 percent in yen.

The report in the China Securities Journal, an official newspaper, cited unnamed sources in Beijing.

The allocation of Chinese foreign exchange reserves is considered to be a state secret, but analysts have long assumed that about two-thirds are invested in dollar assets.

Separately, Hu Xiaolian, a vice governor with the People's Bank of China, warned that depreciation loomed as a risk for foreign exchange reserves, held by developing countries.

"Given a reserve currency's value be, comes unstable, there will be quite large depreciation risks for assets," she wrote in an article that appeared in the latest issue of China Finance, a Chinese language magazine published under the central bank.

Her comments echoed a long standing discomfort with a global financial system dominated by a single currency in the dollar.

"The outbreak and spread of the global financial crisis has highlighted the inherent deficiencies and systemic risks in the current international currency system," she said. "A diversified international currency system will be more conducive to international economic and financial stability."

To that end, developing countries must speed up reform of their financial markets, and China would work to promote greater cross-border use of the yuan, she said. Reuters

Oil spill costs hit $8B, says British Petroleum

LONDON—Oil giant BP said Friday that the Gulf oil spill had cost the British company $8 billion ($12 billion) since it began.

"The cost of the response to date amounts to approximately $8 billion, including the cost of the spill response, containment, relief well drilling, wildlife and consulting, grants to the Gulf states, Alaska and federal costs," BP said in a statement.

The April 20 spill was triggered when an explosion ripped through the Deepwater Horizon rig in the Gulf of Mexico, killing 11 workers and sinking the huge offshore platform two days later.

The flow of oil into the sea was not fully stemmed until July 15.

BP has borrowed from the oilmaker will cost a total of about $32.2 billion, after pushing the group into a $16.9 billion loss in the second quarter—which was the biggest quarterly loss in British corporate history.

The statement estimated that $8 had agreed to set up a $20 billion compensation fund for residents affected by the spill. AFP

Dependency on Opec oil to rise, says international energy body

NEW DELHI—Dependency on oil produced by Opec countries is set to rise in the next 5 to 10 years across Opec regions and not just in the Middle East, Mohsen Tamalin, executive director of the International Energy Agency (IEA), said on Friday.

"At least Opec oil capacity] is not coming, it is leveling off and then it will decline so dependency on Opec will increase. Cost of development in Opec is cheapest," Tamalin told reporters.

Tamalin was speaking at the launch of the organization's Energy Technology Perspectives 2010 report.

The IEA, which advises 28 industrialized countries, said global oil demand would rise by 1.8 million barrels per day (mbpd) year-on-year to 86.6 mbpd in 2015.

It was 86,000 bpd higher than the forecast in its July report.

Opec crude oil supply fell in August to its lowest since November 2009 on reduced supplies from Nigeria, the United Arab Emirates and Iraq after increased output in Angola, a Reuters survey showed on Wednesday. Reuters

Asian stocks rise on positive US data

BEIJING—Most Asian stock markets climbed Friday as investors took heart from a slight improvement in US economic indicators amid lingering worries over the pace of the global economic recovery.

Data were unclear across the region as exporters waited for US employment figures due out later Friday. Japan's jobless rate is expected to rise to 5.0 percent from 4.9 percent in July, according to a survey of analysts by Thomson Reuters.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 stock index was 51.29 points, or 0.6 percent, to 9,114.13 and South Korea's Kospi edged up 0.1 percent to 1,730.82. Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index added 0.1 percent to 20,819.98.

China's benchmark Shanghai Composite Index closed flat at 2,653.39, though tech stocks edged up as government announcements of plans to support development of clean energy and reform China.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 gained 0.2 percent to 4,841.30. Markets in New Zealand, Singapore and Taiwan also advanced. India's Sensex was flat at 18,240.50.

In New York on Thursday, the Dow Jones industrial average added 99.68 points, or 0.8 percent, to 10,126.74.

Sentiment in Wall Street turned upbeat after the National Association of Realtors said Thursday that the number of buyers who signed contracts to purchase homes rose 1.2 percent in July after falling a record low in June.

In currencies, the dollar fell to 84.18 yen in Tokyo from 84.28 yen in New York late Thursday. The euro was flat at $1.2920. AP

A TOURIST checks out a sign displaying currency exchange rates at a money changer in Bangkok. Thai currency soared to a 29-month high against the US dollar after the dollar lost its highest peak since April 2008. The baht traded at 30.70 to the US dollar. AP

Asia mills eye more wheat cargoes

SINGAPORE—Asian wheat buyers are likely to step up purchases in the weeks ahead on growing fears of higher prices after Russia's move to extend a ban on grain exports lifted US wheat futures to a third straight day.

Flour millers in Asia have stepped up around 150,000 tons of Australian and US wheat cargoes in the past 10 days as buyers returned to the market after a month's hiatus, traders said on Friday.

"Buyers see prices as prices are going up," said a trading manager with an international commodity trading house in Asia. "You can't really say how much the market will go up because of Russia's extension of the ban, but mills are actively looking to book cargoes."

Benchmark Chicago Board of Trade wheat futures rose 0.7 percent on Friday, extending gains on expectations of higher demand for US wheat cargoes due to lack of supplies from the drought-stricken Black Sea region.

Russia on Thursday signaled that it would extend its ban until late 2011 after the worst drought in years cut this year's grain harvest by around a third.

Flour mills in Indonesia, one of Asia's top wheat importers, this week bought 225,000 tons of Australian standard white at around $300 a ton, including cost and freight.

Taiwan awarded a tender this week to import 66,000 tons of US wheat for November arrival, while Thailand took around 90,000 tons for shipment in October.

Vietnam bought US dark northern spring wheat at around $290 a ton fob and paid $285 a tonne for soft white wheat. Reuters

For Dell, there's plenty of fish after losing 3PAR to HP

BANGALORE—Dell Inc. may have lost out bidding over for 3PAR Inc. to Hewlett-Packard Co., but the data-storage industry offers plenty of other targets.

Since Dell was stalling to spend over $2 billion on 3PAR, analysts said the company could go after other small, niche tech-startup companies, although they may no longer be hotspots as avid speculation has boosted their prices.

"It is definitely a loss for Dell, but that is a situation where they were competing with someone about four times their size," said Andrew Richmond, an associate at the technology-investment banking group of investment banking firm TD Capital.

Analysts say potential targets in data storage could include Compellent Technologies Inc, whose shares jumped 18.8 percent on Thursday; Constellation System Inc, whose shares rose 5.2 percent; Isilon Systems Inc, which rose 3.5 percent; as well as privately held Pillar Data Systems and Datadirect Networks.

Such companies aren't the same as 3PAR, which specializes in high-end storage that can help large companies handling high volumes of data. But by spending less on a modular or lower-end data storage technology, Dell could move easier to developing its own more advanced tool.

"Dell wants to and needs to expand the enterprise storage side of their business," said TM Capital's Richmond. "There are a lot of smaller private companies that are ... little below the radar and there are definitely a lot of acquisitions."

Some analysts said Dell could look at Compellent—with a market cap of $586 million—as it is not as pricey as the traditional storage solutions meant for small and medium businesses.

Compellent, which helps firms store and recover vast amounts of data and services that customers don't want to run themselves, could attract Dell because of its low-cost data storage products, which have relatively low-cost products, could fetch a price anywhere between $700 million and $1 billion, according to analysts.

That would imply a forward price-to-sales multiple of 3.8 to 5.3 times, according to Reuters data. 3PAR's deal for $966 valued it at more than 6 times estimated forward sales.

"There are plenty of very valuable storage companies out there to buy," said Brian Benjamin Wise. Reuters

Agreeing to $3.3-B sale, Burger King aims to fix its business

A CUSTOMER has a meeting at Burger King outlet in Shanghai. Burger King Holdings Inc., the No. 2 US fast-food chain, agreed to sell itself to an investment group led by 3G Capital Management LLC and Brazil's billionaire Jorge Paulo Lemann for $3.26 billion, giving the No. 2 US fast-food chain breathing room to fix its business and close the gap with leader McDonald's Corp. REUTERS

LOS ANGELES—Burger King Holdings Inc agreed to sell itself to investment firm 3G Capital for $3.26 billion, giving the No. 2 US fast-food chain breathing room to fix its business and close the gap with leader McDonald's Corp.

At $24 a share, the offer represents a 46 percent premium to Burger King's price before news of the negotiations emerged late Wednesday.

"It was a call out of the blue," Burger King chairman and chief executive John Chidsey told Reuters in an interview.

Chidsey will keep his roles during a transition period and then become executive vice with 3G managing director Alex Behring.

The sale, worth about $4 billion including debt, is expected to close in the last three months of 2010. Burger King has until Oct. 12 to solicit a better offer from other buyers.

"It looks like a good price for Burger King shareholders. I don't anticipate [an] someone is going to come in higher," said Tobias Advisors Group analyst Tony Rizzo.

"The valuation is based on good fundamentals, which Burger King doesn't have and probably won't have for some of his year," said Hilliard Brothers restaurant analyst Steve Ma. Wednesday, he had issued a research note saying that a $25 per-share price would satisfy shareholders.

Analysts said the deal's value—or almost nine times cash flow over the last year—is higher than previous restaurant deals and could pave the way for more.

TPG Capital LP, Goldman Sachs Group Inc's Goldman Sachs Capital Partners and Bain Capital Investors collectively own about 31 percent of Burger King and will tender their shares in the 30% offer, due to begin by Sept. 17.

Burger King's private-equity investors took the company public just four years ago at an initial share price of $17.

At the market close on Tuesday, shares in Burger King were down more than 33 percent since the end of 2009. McDonald's shares were up nearly 10 percent. Reuters

BUSINESS

Cebu Pacific sees 10 million passengers in '10

By Paolo S. Montalbo

CEBU-OWNED CEBU Pacific budget carrier Cebu Pacific expects to carry over 10 million passengers by the end of the year—the most in the company's history—on the acquisition of additional aircraft allows it to add flights to key destinations.

In a statement, the company said it expects the delivery of four new Airbus A320 planes between October this year and January 2011.

The airline firm a total of 4.1 million domestic passengers in the first half of the year, which is 1.2 million more than rival Philippine Airlines' (PAL) 2.8 million domestic passengers.

This translates to a year-on-year growth of 13 percent for Cebu Pacific and a 46 percent market share in the domestic air travel sector.

Data for international passenger traffic in the first half have not yet been released.

"We hope to carry even more passengers as we expect delivery of four more brand-new Airbus aircraft from October 2010 to January 2011," said Candice Iyog, Cebu Pacific chief executive for marketing and distribution.

"Twenty more brand-new Airbus aircraft will be delivered until 2014. We will use all these to add more frequencies, routes and flights to lower our fares even further and provide even more travel convenience to guests," she said.

CEB operates an extensive network, including Boracay (Caticlan), Puerto Princesa, Dumaguete, Cebu, Davao and Bacolod.

It flies 39 direct domestic flights from Manila, 10 direct flights from Cebu, five direct flights from Davao and one flight from Clark.

It also flies to Busan, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Osaka, Seoul (Incheon), Jakarta, Singapore, Ho Chi Minh, Taipei, Macau, Hong Kong, Singapore, Bangkok, Ilo-ilo (Iloilo) and Kuala Lumpur.

The airline's Beijing service will be launched on Sept. 5.

The Philippines' largest airline in terms of number of passengers flown, Cebu Pacific operates the youngest aircraft fleet in the country with 21 Airbus and 8 ATR 72-500 aircraft.

Gokongwei firm buys new planes, plans to add more flights next year

DBP targets ₱3-B income in 2010, 2011

By Michelle V. Reyes

STATE-OWNED Development Bank of the Philippines aims to post a "modest" net income of around P3 billion this year and in 2011.

The target net income is just half the actual profit of 9% billion recorded last year, which was the highest on record and 86 percent higher than the previous year's P5.6 billion.

DBP President Francisco del Rosario Jr. said DBP's income last year was unusually high because of non-recurring income.

He said that before 2009, the bank's annual income ranged from P2.5 billion to P3 billion, and so a profit of P3 billion for this year and the next would be "reasonable."

"DBP has grown in revenues and profits... However, the challenge for us now has been how accomplishments with the revenue for our customers—which is in micro, mesoenterprise development, agriculture and small and medium enterprises (SMEs)," Del Rosario said.

Earlier reports said the bank's outstanding loans stood at P193.9 billion for SMEs, P9.8 billion for social services sector, and around 9% billion in fund environment related projects.

Del Rosario said DBP would boost lending, especially to SMEs, to better fulfill its mandate of accelerating growth of the overall economy.

He said the bank would also expand its network of branches to cover more rural areas.

DBP has 77 branches nationwide.

Farmers get tech-savvy, use phones to get rice advice

THE MOBILE phone may soon replace the centuries-old grass hat as the Filipino rice farmer's most basic accessory.

Already responsible for helping to topple a government in the Southeast Asian archipelago, mobile phone text messaging could now help launch a text little agricultural revolution.

"Precision agriculture used to be available to small-scale farmers at their fingertips with a few minutes," says Roland Bezuidt of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).

The institute develops new rice varieties and crop management techniques aimed at increasing poverty and ensuring that rice production is sustainable, has minimal environmental impact and can cope with climate change.

The non-profit organization, which has its headquarters at Los Baños in Laguna, now hopes to harness the country's mobile-phone mania to bring cutting-edge techniques to an ancient system.

The Philippines has been called the texting capital of the world, with some 70 million mobile phone users sending up to 300 million messages a day.

From this month, IRRI scientists led by Bezuidt plan to use text messaging to send pest-management advice and fertilizer recommendations to local farmers by interactive voice response (IVR).

All the farmer has to do is dial a number on his mobile phone, wait four six automated voice message will then ask him a series of questions on which he should respond by pressing a number on the phone keypad.

Once he has answered all the questions he will receive a text message with recommendations on the amounts, sources and timings of fertilizer applications for his specific rice paddy.

Although project scientist Reneva Castillo thinks many young Filipino farmers are already addicted to text-saving, she admits that the older generation may struggle a bit with the IVR technology.

However, during initial trials of the program, most feedback from the farmers had been positive, Castillo said.

Rice is the staple food of the Philippines but the country is not self-sufficient and last year it was the world's largest importer of the grain.

AFP

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A world all its own

Hyundai presents a Wonderful World of Innovations via its first-ever 3D Concept Show

Driving their way to inspire a bright future for the Philippine auto industry. Distinguished guests from the Philippine and Korean governments, as well as Hyundai Motor Company and HMIL, show their full support for the 2nd Philippine International Motor Show. In photo are (Presidente Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III (third from left), Ambassador Lee Hee-Min (1st from left), from the Embassy of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Gregorio Domingo (6th from left), Secretary of Trade and Industry, Mr. Jaime Bautista (2nd from left), President and CEO of Hyundai Motor Company Mr. Richard Lee (3rd from left, partly hidden), Chairman Emeritus of HMIC, Mr. Edward Go (5th from left), Chairman of HMIL, and Ms. Fe Perez-Aguda (7th from left), President and CEO of HMIL

A spectacle to behold. The Wonderful World of Hyundai becomes a spectacular reveal, highlighted by the Hyundai i-Motion Rebirth Mirror in CUPC and an ensemble of visionary leaders and world-class talent. 3rd by (from L-R) Mr. Conrad Muna, Vice-Chairman of HMIL, Ms. Lee Sohyoung, Vice-president of the sales division, Mr. Brian Yang, President and CEO of Hyundai Motor Company, Mr Bi-ho Jung, executive Chairman, prince ballerina Ms. Lisa Macuja-Elizalde, Ambassador Lee Hee-Min from the Embassy of the Republic of Korea, Ms. Fe Perez-Aguda, President and CEO of HMIL, Mr. Edward Go, Chairman of HMIL, and Mr. Richard Lee, Chairman Emeritus of HMIC

Hyundai Motor Company and Hyundai Motor Philippines, Inc. (HMIL), the authorized distributor of Hyundai automobiles in the Philippines, made an auspicious arrival at the 3rd Philippine International Motor Show (PIMS), as it entered in a world of innovation through fuel efficient and eco-friendly automobiles for Humanity Titled "The Wonderful World of Hyundai", the exhibit of HMPI at this year's PIMS brought to fore Hyundai's pursuit of environmental leadership through technologies that push frontiers in mobility and an eco-friendly approach to responsible automaking.

Engaging the Filipino motoring community further, Hyundai not only showcased its best-of-breed automobiles, but brought around 700 guests and well-wishers to an artistic different dimension and spectacular environment that represented the beauty of nature and technology in one awe-inspiring space. Taking another step ahead further in presenting its vision of class-leading vehicles, Hyundai launched its first-ever 3D concept show at the PIMS and the country's first real augmented reality (AR) and 3D show complete with 3D eyes glasses, which marked a richly high technologies 3D theater ambiance and experience.

Following an inspiring keynote knowledge from Ms. Fe Perez-Aguda, President and CEO of HMIL, The Wonderful World of Hyundai came to life with a 3D audio-visual presentation of Hyundai's environmentally friendly, captured in the heartwarming song, "What A Wonderful World." What complemented its magnificent digital ensemble was an equally magnificent ensemble of performers that graced Hyundai's wonderful world: prima ballerina Lisa Macuja-Elizalde and Ballet Manila, young singing sensation Charlie Green and acclaimed singer Lea Salonga, with soul-stirring passion from the Philharmonia, conducted by no less than maestro Gerard Salonga. "What a breathing environment inspired by Pandora from James Cameron's movie Avatar and an awesome production number by wonderfully talented Filipino artists, HMPI's exhibit captured an image of an ecosystem from an advanced civilization, truly a symbol of Hyundai's vision of a new world that fuses together the beauty of nature and the wonders of automotive technology.

Present to witness The Wonderful World of Hyundai unfold during the 3rd PIMS were no less than latest garlanded media men, Mr. Brian Yang, President and CEO of Hyundai Motor Company; the Excellency, Mr. Lee Hee-Min, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary from the Embassy of the Republic of Korea, and HMIL's top honchos, namely Mr. Richard Lee, Chairman Emeritus of HMIL, Mr. Edward Go, Chairman of HMIL, and Ms. Fe Perez-Aguda, President and CEO of HMIL.

Straight from the showroom, Hyundai's best-of-breed technologies: the all-new Sonata, Grand Starex Limousine, Tucson, Santa Fe, and Genesis Coupe, took the spotlights of the Brian Tada Center on HMIL's display. Putting the exclamation point at the Hyundai display was the i-Motion Rebirth Mirror by Charlie Green, who, this 5th prototype car of the Hyundai Glamping Design (HMD) series, further highlighting the infinite possibilities that Hyundai is willing to explore in its pursuit of advancing mobility and pushing harmony in the existence of man, machine, and the world.

Truly, everything in the automobile area a translation of Hyundai's devotion to bringing its eco-environmental activities to fruition. For more than just interplaying amazing 3D visuals and fun musical performances. The Wonderful World of Hyundai aims to invite all Filipino drivers to participate in its global campaign to promote eco-friendly automaking technologies that can coexist together as long as humans observe responsible consumerism, manufacturing, and other eco-driven automotive practices.

The Is Mine. Another promising vision in the future of mobility.

But it and space inspired, the i-Mobe, introduced in 2009, is a stunning fusion blend of an environmental life form protected by a compact, robotic shell armed and technology infused sweet outside.

More than its eco & and environmental appeal, the HMD-i takes advantage of an eco-friendly, hybridized, electric power-source. Its performance benefits with a maximum electric power of 80 kilowatts and a peak torque of 16 kg-m between 1 190 rpm. With a 1-liter, Dual CVVT enhanced with turbocharging and direct injection engine, Hyundai's automaking technology and efficient boost of power. While the i-Mobe's dual-clutch gearbox commands over acceleration through 6 forward, automatic gear selection. Power is also enhanced by the Electric Double Layer) and 120 battery help supply power. In the starter over-to-alternator that delivers up to 1kW of torque during start-up, allowing precision. This concept car strives for the best CO2 emissions possible, at just 85g/km, and as for fuel consumption, its efficiency is rated at 3.3-liter/100km.

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PROPERTY

Lito Cesar D. Pangyarihan

Environment-friendly construction gets 'green' light

THE FIRST zero PET-bottle school in the country

By Tonyo R. Salazar

ENVIRONMENT DEGRADATION is not a new problem. For generations, humans have been contributing their part in the depletion of natural resources, changing global temperatures, loss of biodiversity and the extinction of many animal and plant species, and the gradual disappearance of vast tracts of rainforests.

More alarmingly, environment experts are observing that the rate of environment degradation brought on by human activities is escalating, to a point that the adverse changes are becoming irreversible.

Even as early as two decades ago, over 1,600 senior scientists from 71 countries—including over half of all living Nobel Prize winners at that time—signed and released a document titled "World Scientists' Warning to Humanity".

But from the looks of it, the world has largely ignored those scientists' timely warning.

Environmental sustainability

The local construction sector has been scrambling to incorporate environmental sustainability in its quality and marketing processes. Environment experts have often viewed the construction sector as one of the most significant contributors to the carbon footprints of the industrial sector. According to environment engineer Dean Jesse McEldin, author of "Zero Waste to Live Green," these conservation impacts can be controlled while still allowing the future occupants of construction developments to maintain a comfortable level of existence.

Several years ago, western leaders in the conservation industry have observed that conservation waste packages have grown to such huge proportions that they have called them the country's biggest "garbage pile." Members in Construction (WIC), an organization of women leaders in the industry, had even made plans to conduct a step-by-step information drive to streamline conservation issues into sensible materials.

Solutions

Three months ago, the Bottle School Project of social entrepreneur Illac Diaz as of Mollusbot Foundation field a benchmarking test to help build the first zero PET bottle school in the country to replace and rebuild a dilapidated school in Tupaig. Other solutions included the Earthen Schools, which hopes to solve the lack of schools in rural areas while protecting the environment; the Rainbow Schools and Cha-Ching Against the Elements, a global campaign for climate-resilient urban communities.

Recently, the Construction Show Manila or Manilarom 2010, which started Sept. 2 and runs up to Sept. 5 is making environmental concerns as their main themes. Currently being held at the SMX Convention Center at the SM Mall of Asia Complex in Pasay City, Manilarom 2010, along with Green Forum 2010 held yesterday and

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Geo-Estate

Showing the industry a viable model

By Charles E. Bukot

WILLIE UY is on a mission. The president and CEO of Phinma Properties is out to prove that in this period when everything seems to cost more, Filipino homebuyers with a limited budget could still be able to own bigger-than-average condo units and a better living environment.

"Our vision is to create an opportunity for all Filipinos to own quality yet affordable homes in strategic locations in Metro Manila. We're not just after providing them with spacious and comfortable units but also communities that make them feel valued," Uy explains.

In line with the company's "Uy Living Made Easy" campaign, Uy says Phinma Properties (www.phinmaproperties.com) is set to further strengthen its position as one of the market leaders in medium and high-rise condominium units by offering buyers "more space for the same price."

To date, Phinma Properties has successfully completed seven residential developments and has unmounted 7,611 condominium units as we are confident we will be able to fulfill our mission," Uy says.

Established communities

The company which began operations in 1967, already boast successful communities located in Bacolod City (Pomarosa Bristo) as well as in Quezon City where most of their projects are located (Sunny Villas, San Antonio Garden Villas, Spacio Hermosa, Ayanna Hermosa West Villas, Sunvie Orthanese and Sendo Orthanese duplex).

In fact, the two most recent developments are also located in Quezon City: Sofia Sicilienne, an 840-unit project in Capitol Hills that features five medium-rise buildings, and Flora Vista, an 870-unit project near Commonwealth that features nine five-story condominium buildings on a 1.9-hectare property.

Phinma Properties also hints of launching three more projects by year's end, this time to be located in Pasig area and two others in the southern part of Metro Manila.

"These projects, the current and the upcoming ones, exemplify affordability, good location, fast turnover and community building. All of the units also allow residents to enjoy flexibility of expanding by being able to adjoin units. They could also avail column-free units that allow buyers flexibility in space planning their homes and maximizing valuable floor space," Uy describes.

History

So how is Phinma Properties able to provide bigger and better units at no extra cost? The answer partly lies on the company's history. Phinma Properties belongs to the much larger organization, Phinma Group, which has been in existence since 1916 and whose core business for the past 50 years was construction materials, including cement and steel (today, however, the group is more focused on shelter, education, power, mining and financial services)," Uy says.

In its early years, Phinma Properties also invested in a building system that is still being utilized today.

Together, these factors allow Phinma Properties to build more structures in a much shorter time, thus allowing fast turnover as well as sell units at affordable prices and with reasonable profits.

Fast turnover

"All of our best-value-for-money condos enable residents to move in, in a short span of time because of our fast turnover of units. Our unbeatable affordability of units starting at less than P1 million with amortization starting at P5,833 per month, allows our buyers to enjoy their space for the same price that allows them to not only live their dream of owning a home but also upgrade their lifestyle," says Grant Orbeta, Phinma Properties VP for Sales and Marketing and Design.

Orbeta adds that the company goes beyond locating their projects near commercial areas but also in major thoroughfares and public transport systems.

"The mean hour cost in traveling to

PHINMA PROPERTIES says it is not just after providing homebuyers with spacious and comfortable units but also communities that make them feel valued.

ALL OF the units currently offered in Phinma Properties communities (like the Flora Vista in Quezon City) allow residents to enjoy bigger yet still affordable units.

Life at The Lerato

MAKATI ISN'T always about business. It is also the home to some of the most creative people in the arts and advertising industry where you won't be surprised to see an art gallery just a few yards away from an Italian deli and a series of warehouse-sized studios shooting music videos, glossy magazine pictorials or even a TV commercial.

Not too far away are schools, museums and some of the best commercial establishments in the city. Greenbelt and Glorietta, Cadiner-inclusive, are only a short ride away, as is the new Bonifacio Global City, or something by Ayala's Proclamations in BGC Plaza, or his own to Spicy Fingers at Greenbelt for Comedy Cartel's brand of humor or a pastry-teaching at Alliance Francaise de Manille.

Makati offers not only convenience but a lifestyle most will die-hard fanatics find the rise of BGC3 North (Makati Central Business District North) highlights the development of a mixed-use neighborhood that will allow residents to explore different aspects of this bustling, thriving and vibrant commercial capital—finding those establishments that will complement their needs and balance their lives.

New residential-commercial dev't

The Lerato, a new integrated residential-commercial development from Alveo Land, Ayala Land's standard bearer for investment, offers a home where every need a unrivaled and your creative spirit can flourish. Nestled on Malugay Street, near another development of Alveo Land, The Columns, future residents will appreciate the development's own retail establishments and the project's proximity to business and commercial establishments, complemented by quaint dining and cultural destinations that define Makati's role as a premier financial district but as a melting pot of arts, culture and innovation.

It is also near commercial, retail, educational and institutional landmarks such as Glorietta and Greenbelt Malls, Makati Medical Center, Rockwell Plaza, Asian Institute of School, Magsa Institute of Technology, De La Salle-Graduate School of Business, Assumption College, Colegio San Agustin, Makati Sports Club and Makati Golf.

It'll be a cinch to nip out on a Saturday morning to buy fresh French croque and baguette at the Salcedo Saturday Market and enjoy a leisurely brunch at home before catching a film at Greenbelt or perhaps a photo exhibit at Silverlens Gallery or Finale Art File.

Tangible representation

"MCBD North is Ayala Land's newest district in Makati poised to develop into an impactful, integrated mixed-use district," explains Jennylle Tupaz, project development head of Alveo Land. "And The Lerato is essentially the tangible representation of Alveo Land's commitment to enrich this needs life balance of Makati's creative culture."

Being the premiere developer within MCBD North, with signature project—The Columns at Ayala Avenue, Alveo Land frames on their understanding of the thriving district's culture and lifestyle. Through their company Ayala Land, to emphasize and define Makati North as the preferred address for residential, business and recreational pursuits.

The 3-tower project will house a Wellness room to help everyone be in tune with their inner selves and to reach out their community arc. All Fitness rooms for aspirants of the performing arts; private area, a well-thought-out jogging trail, and a rooftop/garden where one can get lit to privacy surrounded by a carefully landscaped area with well-tended plants, and to encourage conversation and bonding of a variety of cultures, characters and personalities.

Alveo Land sets the benchmark for innovation in Ayala Land. Armed with sharper foresight, unparalleled excellence and total commitment, it is a real estate company that doesn't just find the means to provide the most innovative homes, it looks for ways to make you live the life you deserve.

Model units are available for viewing daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the ground floor of Greenbelt 1 located on Legaspi Street, Makati City.

THE LERATO, a new integrated residential-commercial development from Alveo Land, Ayala Land's standard bearer for innovation, offers a home where every need is answered and your creative spirit can flourish.

THE SAPPHIRE

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MAKE EVERY weekend count. Enjoy the finest of urban living in a nurturing community that lets you live, work and play in perfect harmony. Premier real estate developer Robinsons Land Corp. led by Frederick Go, its president and chief operating officer, proudly introduces its new addition to its roster of pioneering residential and excellent mixed-used developments—its newest gem...The Sapphire.

The Sapphire allows forest residents to experience the heights of modern urban living amid a landscaped, thrilling environment with an ideal location. With two magnificent towers, both standing at 38 stories high, the vibrant development is set to be the most desirable address in the bustling Ortigas Center. The buildings' inspiring art Deco architecture with its rich and classic characters adds dramatic sophistication to the metropolitan structures in the city.

Vibrant address

With the distinction of a stylish address comes the convenience that the prime location provides. Strategically bordered by Sapphire and Garnet streets, and situated at the heart of the Ortigas Center Business District, The Sapphire guarantees accessibility and convenience perfect for your active lifestyle. Its quick access to everything brings you the authority to manage your time and juggle your priorities seamlessly.

Be at the center of the most happening lifestyle-rich shopping destinations and hotels like Robinsons Galleria, Podium, Monterrazas, Greenhills Plaza and Holiday Inn. Be minutes away from major establishments and upmarket learning institutions such as La Salle Greenhills, Brent, and St. Paul Pasig as well as world-class facilities like the Medical City.

Be directly connected to the Makati business district. Bonifacio Global City and the rest of Metro Manila through a quick dash to the MRT, the city's main transport hub, or major thoroughfares such as Edsa and C-5 road, all just easily accessible. With everything within reach, The Sapphire's lifestyle and recreation

COMPLIMENTING THE captivating aesthetics is an exciting mix of amenities that encourage quality time for oneself and for the family. Choose to unwind on the ground floor which boasts of the adult pool, kiddie pool and the landscaped garden.

Bask in utmost fun and relaxation at the second floor which will house a full range of modern facilities such as function rooms, game room, fitness center, private theater, billiards and music room, massage suites, children's play area, WiFi lounge and landscaped open deck. To further serve the needs of unit owners, the luxury development will feature a common entrance lobby with a reception counter, three passenger elevators, standby power generators, fire protection and control of outlets, and a building administration office, among many others.

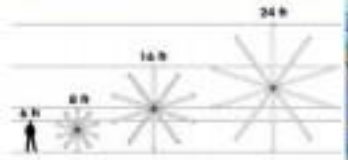
Life of luxury and comfort

After a tiring day at work, come home to a place that affords you the pride of ownership and gives you a sense of well being. At The Sapphire, embrace the good life that you deserve. With only a few units per floor, The tastiest development offers optimum privacy and unrivaled comfort. Its excellent layout and spacious floor plans give hardworking, middle-class individuals and growing families their much-needed space to breathe and relax.

The first tower boasts of efficiently laid out 1 bedroom units with areas of 36, 43 and 47.39 square meters, only at The Sapphire. It also offers 45.50 and 60 square meters, and 3 bedroom units with 97 sq m. It's about time to reward yourself with a vibrant, urban lifestyle that keeps you close to everything you need, while keeping you close to home, only at The Sapphire.

The Sapphire is a project of Robinsons Residences, the urban lifestyle brand of the Robinsons Land Corp. Residential Division. The Sapphire's expected turnover date is September 2013.

AN ARCHITECT'S rendition of The Sapphire's building perspective.



THREE FANS range in diameter from 6 to 24 feet with 6 to 10 blades.

Green low velocity fans

WHEN WE were kids, I remember eating in downtown restaurants and watching in amazement at the big ceiling fans with their oversized wooden blades. I still remember how the contraption made me feel comfortable and made me enjoy my meal.

GREEN ARCHITREMDS

Amanda de Jesus

Today, the idea of cooling a place by using ceiling fans has been developed further with the coming of a new generation of green ceiling fans called large, low velocity fans that have been redesigned for commercial spaces such as shopping malls, office buildings, churches and recreational facilities.

Large, low-velocity fan

This type of fan works basically the same way as a conventional ceiling fan. However, this is much larger and operates at slow speeds (80 revolutions per minute or similar) to reduce electricity. It has aerodynamic airfoils rotating at slow speeds to move large volumes of air quietly and efficiently. These fans range in diameter from 6 to 24 feet with 6 to 10 blades. They are capable of moving a large volume of air in wide spaces with ceilings ranging from 15 to more than 120 feet high.

These green fans operate with variable frequency drives (VFD) which can make it operate at higher speeds of up to 80 to 88 revolutions per minute. They have small motors ranging from ½ to 3 horsepower.

GREEN, LOW velocity fan works basically the same way as conventional ceiling fans. However, this is much larger and operates at slow speeds to reduce electricity. It has aerodynamic airfoils rotating at slow speeds to move large volumes of air quietly and efficiently. — AMANDA DE JESUS

Due to their slow operating speed, large, low velocity fans are very quiet.

Noisy fans

Conventional fans have many disadvantages. They are noisy because of the way they are constructed and the speed of their blades. This noise is very disruptive, particularly in areas where people congregate such as auditoriums and places of worship.

Many people directly in front of the fan are bothered and feel uncomfortable due to the high velocity of the air moved by these smaller fans.

Women in particular hate strong fans because it ruins their hairstyle.

With so many conventional fans needed to cool a space, it costs more to maintain and operate.

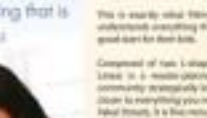
Cooling alternative

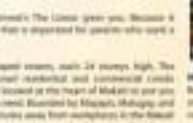
These fans became popular as a cooling alternative for spaces where air conditioning was impractical and expensive due mainly to their energy-efficiency features, superior airflow and quiet operation.

They have a wide range of applications.

GREEN B2-3

PR Kitchens Inc.





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Fending off a potentially deadly bite

By Charles E. Rukas

AEDES CUBED easily carries dengue fever but not lethal complications known as dengue hemorrhagic fever.

First recognized in the 1950s during a dengue epidemic in the Philippines and Thailand, DHF is characterized by a fever that lasts two to seven days.

It usually comes after an initial fever, wherein a patient thinking it's already over, overall well-being develops symptoms that would include appearance of rashes in the arms and legs that may soon spread to the chest and abdomen.

Persistent vomiting, severe abdominal pain and difficulty breathing may follow.

According to doctors, this also marks the beginning of a 24- to 48-hour period when the smallest vessels in the body become excessively "leaky" with the patients showing manifestations of mild bleeding in the eyes, nose or gums. In addition, the patients with DHF develop low platelet counts (platelets are the particles in blood that help with clotting and as a result, blood does not clot normally).

If this circulatory failure is not corrected, this may lead to shock, followed by death.

No specific medication

Because DHF is caused by a virus for which there is no known cure or vaccine, the only treatment is to treat the symptoms.

If transfusions of fresh blood or platelets can correct bleeding problems especially when platelet count gets dangerously low, intravenous fluids and electrolytes are also used to correct electrolyte imbalances as well as oxygen therapy may be needed to sustain adequate blood oxygen.

Because rehydration with intravenous fluids is often necessary to treat dehydration, staying in a hospital or clinic is highly advised so supportive care in an intensive care unit/environment may be given.

If left untreated, one could end up dead from encephalopathy (altered brain function and structure), liver damage, cerebral brain damage, seizures or shock.

Hampered

Virulent developers are hampered by several challenges.

First is the fact that there are four distinct, but closely related, viruses that cause dengue fever. Recovery from infection by one provides lifelong immunity against that virus but confers only partial and transient protection against subsequent infection by the other three viruses.

With these closely related viruses, the vaccine that should be developed must be effective against all four types.

Secondly, though first identified more than 50 years ago, little is still known about how the dengue fever or the DHF typically behaves and how the virus interacts with the immune system.

At the moment, the most effective means are still those that avoid the bites of the mosquitoes that carry the virus like the Aedes (upper).

Experts remind that dengue virus is not contagious and cannot be spread directly from person to person. It could only be spread by certain species of mosquitoes that, interestingly, traditionally feed on ancient blood parents.

Best preventive measure

Because of this, the best preventive measure is to eliminate the places where these infective female Aedes mosquitoes lay eggs: artificial containers that hold clean and stagnant water.

Items that collect rainwater or are used to store water (for example, plastic containers, toilet bowl, buckets, or used automobile tires) should be covered or properly discarded.

Pet and animal watering containers and vases with fresh flowers should be emptied and scrubbed at least once a week as this will help eliminate the mosquito eggs and larvae and reduce the number of mosquitoes present in the areas.

Aside from searching for and destroying breeding grounds of mosquitos, the public is also advised to do self-protection by using mosquito nets, wearing protective clothing, or using mosquito repellents.

The Department of Health reminds that these mosquitoes should not be taken for granted as they already caused more than 40,000 Filipinos to become bedridden or sent to hospitals since January. Close to 300 individuals have already died from DHF and other complications.

The Luneta tragedy and the subconscious mind

MEDICAL FILES

Rafael Castillo, M.D.

MOST PEOPLE who have watched Leonardo di Caprio's movie "Inception," would probably think that it's just a science fiction movie, a product of a creatively prolific imagination and is capable of either extreme good or evil, and its powers can swing wildly like a pendulum such that it can even cause life or death.

Although the cinematic treatment of the movie stretches the imagination a bit too far, making it seem unrealistic and purely fictional, the movie theme tackles an uncharted territory of the mind, which is so powerful that it can either cause immense success or tragedy, happiness or sadness, contentment or dissatisfaction. The subconscious mind is capable of either extreme

The day after we watched "Inception," the Luneta hostage taking happened which ended tragically with eight hapless victims falling prey to the evil workings of a misdirected subconscious mind. One could not seem to reconcile that a multi-awarded police officer whose friends and associates claimed in media interviews to be kind and generous could suddenly turn into a monster killer with utter disregard for other people's lives. But such a transformation is possible depending on the seeds that are place in our subconscious minds.

Seeds of negative ideas

We plant seeds of negative ideas such as anger, hatred, envy, disillusionment and resentment, and we bring into fruition rage, fury and tragedy. The more intense we nurture such negative ideas with nourishing negative thoughts and emotions, the faster will be the transformation from a person-able and kind Dr. Jekyll to a ruthless and revengeful Mr. Hyde.

Such was likely what happened to the hostage taker in the Luneta tragedy. And such workings of the subconscious mind do not happen selectively. It is a universal mistake to what we keep on saying that what we say is what we mean. And the outcome is exponential such that values are sow the wind, we don't reap an equal-enough grain of wind; we reap the whirlwind. It happens every day to practically everyone, fortunately not in tragic proportions as in Monday's disaster.

It's the same principle and it works the same way all the time—what we allow to sink in our subconscious mind through our many thought, fueled by similar emotions, will influence our behavior and even other people's behavior to convert into reality what we've been thinking about. This principle can work for us, or it can work against us—ever destroying us—depending on how we use it. Highly successful, accomplished and happy people use this principle positively and bring about the manner they desire but some people unconsciously and unwittingly use this to transform their negative thoughts into reality.

It all starts with whatever seed of an idea we plant in our minds. So we have to be careful with whatever we allow to dwell in our minds because our subconscious mind is a very fertile medium for whatever ideas, good or bad, we allow to germinate in it. The good thing about it is that unlike in DiCaprio's movie wherein other people can technically manipulate/implanting the seed in one's mind, our subconscious mind won't take any idea from any other person unless we allow it. Whatever other people may say or try to influence us with—unless we accept it willingly—will not take roots in our subconscious mind. It's our own thoughts and beliefs that will matter. No one else's matter.

If I may be allowed to give an unsolicited advice to our police officials, their hostage negotiators should be well educated and trained in the principles of the subconscious mind. A psychologist or psychiatrist in their team should be able to help them in this regard. I'm sure understanding how the dysfunctional mind works because of the misdirection of the subconscious mind can help resolve a similar incident in the future with less blood being spilled.

Not convinced

It seems, too, that our police officials and even the mayor of Manila are not convinced of the power of the human mind when under distress. Based on some media reports, they suspect that the bus driver might not be telling the truth for having been able to free himself from the handcuffs using his nail scissors. Silver, he's been being tampered of being an incompetent of the hostage-taker.

Again, the mind can give a person unbelievable powers under such a situation the driver was in, time and again, we've heard of frail men showing such extraordinary strength in carrying heavy objects several times their weight when their houses get burned. Our brain can literally command all the parts of our body to go into an extreme contingency mode and perform unbelievable feats under such a situation. And the situation the driver was in last Monday is no exception. If he had not intended his handcuffs, I would not even be surprised if he had ripped off the steering wheel from its axle and took it with him as he fled away from the tragic bus.

I'm sure the driver is still mentally traumatized by what he had experienced. The statements of some officials making the press declare seem either like a flat or an incomplete one for not helping him recover from the tragedy he was unwittingly made a part of. It's like rubbing salt on a gaping sore wound. It shows an utter lack of sensitivity on the incumbent officials who made such statements.

And sadly, there's a more unfortunate tragedy.

Breastfeeding stations put up in malls, offices

By Theresa S. Saruenigo

BREASTFEEDING, IT seems, has become a lost culture in the country with only 16 percent of Filipino mothers exclusively breastfeeding their babies up to six months.

Compared to its Southeast Asian neighbors, the Philippines also lags in terms of breastfeeding practices, according to data from the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef). In terms of duration of breastfeeding, for example, mothers here have been found to breastfeed for a shorter time or an average of 14 months compared to mothers in Vietnam (16 months); Indonesia (20.7 months); and Cambodia (23 months).

This is precisely why Senator E. Ejercito, a former beauty queen and young mother of one, decided to become a staunch advocate of this practice and had founded Botong, Bonus and Breastfeeding, a nongovernment organization aimed at promoting the benefits of breastfeeding.

"I actually founded my kids to mention because I believe that kids who are breastfed are more emotionally stable and healthy," she said during the valentine ng activity for Breastfeeding month held jointly by SM Supermalls and Unicef.

During the activity dubbed "Yes It Me It Mommy" held on Aug. 27, Unicef and SM, along with advocacy groups, reminded families anew about the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, while saying the private sector to support this "law" practice.

According to Unicef and SM, a large number or 98 percent of mothers to the Philippines begin breastfeeding their babies. However, they also quickly begin to introduce other foods such as water or formula milk, to the benefits of breastfeeding are greatly reduced.

"Infant feeding—the introduction of other liquids or foods before six months—as well as being unnecessary for healthy, can lead to health problems in young babies, such as allergies, respiratory infections, dehydration and even death," they said.

Breastfeeding stations

For its part, SM Supermalls had already began establishing to create and aggressively promote a breastfeeding culture in the country through its 35 breastfeeding stations scattered in its malls nationwide.

Remember Mimos, program director of SM's breastfeeding advocacy program, said in an interview that these stations, in its four years of operation, have so far helped 63,000 moms switch to a healthier and more economical feeding option for their babies.

"This program on breastfeeding began in March 2006 when we launched our first breastfeeding station at SM Megamall with Children for Breastfeeding's Dr. Elvira Bonanno-Laguarta and Unicef. At that time we saw the need for mothers to have their own private place where they can nurse their babies comfortably and peacefully for free," Velasco related.

She explained that breastfeeding stations has a diaper changing area, couches and a lavatory. These are located within the mall clinics and are supervised by trained nurses who can assist mothers on lactation concerns.

"We have received appreciation from our customers as how our stations have been very helpful and convenient for them. The facility has been instrumental in the mothers bonding with their babies and the opportunity for them to give their offspring the best possible nutrition," Velasco said.

With the recent of this initiative, SM plans to open three more breastfeeding stations in the last quarter of the year, a testament to the group's commitment to push for this advocacy.

Gov't support

The government also had its own share in promoting breastfeeding in the country. Recently, the Philippine Congress enacted the Expanded Breastfeeding Law, which, according to Abaja, requires all government and private offices to have breastfeeding stations put up in their offices.

"In fact with this new law working clothes can tell their employers to set up stations where they can feed their child or pump their milk and bring it home to their kids," Abaja explained.

Companies will also be given an incentive if they provide a room for their employees or store, express and to Digestin their milk.

Many and varied benefits

The aggressive promotion of breastfeeding was easier to understand the many and varied benefits that babies and mothers alike can derive from this practice.

According to Unicef, such benefits include protection against gastrointestinal infections, pneumonia and neonatal sepsis, which is observed not only in developing but also in industrialized countries. The risk of developing allergic diarrhea and other infectious illnesses in infants who are either partially breastfed or not breastfed at all, among others.

Breastmilk is also an important source of energy and nutrients in children. It can provide one half or more of a child's energy needs between 6 and 12 months of age and one third of the energy needs between 12 and 24 months.

Unicef further said that adults who were breastfed often have lower blood pressure and lower cholesterol as well as lower rates of overweight, obesity and Type-2 diabetes.

For the mothers, it added, breastfeeding reduces the risk of ovarian and breast cancer.

MY WISH. I love for being a breastfeeding friendly mall and its efforts in raising much love for breastfeeding culture in the Philippines

Experts find animal products, processed meats carcinogenic

By Tina B. Salazar

It's a superhighway of fast foods and easy-to-prepare instant meals and processed meats, it would be wise to "stop, look and listen" for a truly healthy system of food choices.

Biochemists, nutritionists and nutritional oncology specialists from the Barretos de Villa dot listen for the "traffic lights of nutrition." His "red" or "stop" light is pork and pork products (such as those to make hotdogs, cold cuts and processed meats). Former health secretary Dr. Alma Galvez Ona likewise avoids such foods.

'Stop' list

Among other foods in their "stop" list are those high in trans fats and sugar, including such as shortenings, shakes, foods fried in soya oil or canola oil or hydrogenated vegetable oil, processed foods such as white sugar and refined flour.

These "stop" foods are either flush with super-acidic chemicals and toxins or to them-selves adversely affect the human body once they are ingested.

In an interview with Inquirer Health some years back, oncologist Emmanuel Rodriguez, who heads the vital nutrition production laboratory of the Bureau of Animal Industry, revealed: "What's disturbing in food production is the abundance of vaccines, drugs and growth promoters in them. The residues are dangerous." He further revealed the government's limited control in preventing drugs, hormones and even radiation.

With this increasing air confirm in animal feed crops may be ingested by livestock and concentrate in their tissues. They may be applied directly on food crops or come from general environmental contaminants in the soil, water or elsewhere. These include pesticides or chlorinated, and toxic dioxins, which are among the potent pesticides commonly found in the food supply.

Animal drugs administered to livestock, which include antibiotics such as sulfas, are often misused, leaving dangerous levels of residues in animal tissues and subsequently in meat and poultry. Forty of the animal drugs and pesticides known to exist as residues in meat and poultry are carcinogens. Further more, another 13 are suspected carcinogens. It is assumed that there is virtually no monitoring of these substances even though at least 143 pesticides and drugs are known to have chemical residues in meat and poultry.

Growth-stimulating hormones were identified by Epstein and Steinman as another culprit. Sex hormones, both natural and synthetic, which are given to up to 90 percent or more of the cattle raised for beef in the United States, also leave residues in edible portions of meats. Industry experts claim there is no danger to humans from these hormones when they are used properly. But, like antibiotics, growth hormones are sold to ranchers over the counter without a veterinary prescription, and the federal system of inspection for hormone levels are lax! as-sessors human carcinogens by the International Agency for Research on Cancer.

Warning

In the Philippines, a 360 veterinarian told this writer that some longgrown makers do not consider the withdrawal period for feed and ailments, oftentimes using too much of the substance. The public is warned, therefore, to be wary of locally processed foods such as ham or longganisa sold in roasts market.

Sodium nitrite (NaNO2) and its close relative sodium nitrate (NaNO3) are food preservatives found in processed meats such as salami, bacon, ham, pepperoni, bologna, hotdogs and bacon. They preserve the color of the meat (to make it look "healthy" pink rather than hamburger gray), and they also inhibit bacteria in some degree.

Sodium nitrite reacts with stomach acid and other chemicals in the stomach to produce nitrosamines, which have been shown to cause cancer in animals when consumed in large quantities.

Ant vs elephant

SEVERAL SHOWS, including Disney's classic "Dumbo," have played upon the notion that elephants are afraid of mice. But researchers suggest that elephants aren't terrified of these much smaller creatures but rather are wary of moving near what they can't see or hear.

Biologists affiliated with the Mpala Research Centre in Kenya have now determined that even smaller creatures could keep elephants at bay to a surprising degree. Published online Sept. 2 in the journal Current Biology, Aaron Gobaers and Todd Palmer observed how ants interact with elephants foraging for food in an African peninsula.

They found that despite their much larger size, the elephants showed clear of acacia trees that were home to ant swarms, which in turn helped reduce the chances of seeing their favorite food consumed by grasslands as a result of foraging.

Major impact

"It really is a David-and-Goliath type of story, where those little ants can go against those huge beasts and, by protecting their food and having a major impact on the properties of the ecosystems in which they live," said study coauthor and University of Florida in-vestigator Palmer in a statement. "When extinct species had seen on them, the elephants avoided those trees like a kid avoids broccoli."

Many of the trees in those regions had developed defenses to avoid being eaten, the researchers noted. Six example, various species of acacia trees had spiny branches and also contained compounds that made them hard to digest. Those foods in defenses did not deter dogs. Research such as elephants, however, from feasting on the plant tissues, which could permanently damage the trees and reduce their presence in the ecosystem.

To better understand how the ants would impact the elephants' food choices, the researchers delivered scents to determine if the elephants simply preferred acacia trees grown on clayey soil to unclayey trees grown on sandy soil. Ants, which live in the hollow thorns from both soils were presented to the elephants, they were drowned regardless of tree species and variety.

Gobaers and Palmer attributed the elephants' decision in typically to avoid ant-infested trees to "the tendency of ants to attack areas of skin thin and sensitive membranes by biting them and then staying with their mandibles ... Despite their thick dermis," they noted in their paper, "elephants are highly sensitive around their eyes and on the inner membranes of their trunks, which is why being ants probably serves as a strong deterrence."

Plant-ant symbiosis

A second set of experiments confirmed that when the plant-ant symbiosis was interrupted, even time the damage done by the foraging elephants was significantly more than twice as much as the trees had the ants been present to protect their homes.

"We had found that part of the survival—increasing groups of ants that weigh about five milligrams each can and do protect trees from animals that are about a billion times more massive," Palmer said in a statement.

The ants' symbiotic relationship with the acacia trees of Africa trading protection for shelter, it is studied—central to the relationship observed here, according to species of fungi and ants in the tropical forests of Thailand.

As reported in the Aug. 16 edition of the journal Biology Letters, parasitic fungi infect the brains of ants, causing them to leave their usual duties. Before the infection kills them, these so-called "zombie ants" are steered to wood-level breeding grounds and conditions for the fungi to grow further spreading the cycle once more.

E-mail the author at tsalazar@inquirer.com.

Postgrad course in surgery set Sept. 8-10

THE FOUNDATION for the Advancement of Surgical Education Inc. in cooperation with the Department of Surgery of the University of the Philippines-Philippine General Hospital will hold its 16th annual postgraduate course titled "Mastery in Surgery (MIS) Strategies in Difficult Surgical Problems" on Sept. 8-10 at the Diamond Hotel, Philippines, 1 Quirino Street corner Roxas Boulevard, Manila.

This year's course aims to discuss a comprehensive approach in the management of different surgical problems that include preoperative preparation, treatment options, management of complications and postoperative surveillance.

Simultaneous short courses on flexible sigmoidoscopy, cholecystectomy, esophagogastroduodenoscopy and colonoscopy for surgeons and consular nurses will also be conducted on Sept. 10.

Among the highlights of the course is the 14th Chancellor Alfredo T. Ramirez, M.D. Memorial Lecture, which will be delivered this year by one of the most prominent surgeons and alumni, Dr. Rolando Tompio.

Registration is ongoing at the UP-PGH Department of Surgery. For inquiries, please call (02) 554-8477; (02) 554-8400 local 2150; fax (02) 526-4396; mobile no. (0918) 673-7930.

Ohana Place nears completion

AFTER TWO years since its launch as the first modern Polynesian-themed development south of Metro Manila, Ohana Place is nearing completion as a fully operational community with its sixth building, Lanai, recently achieving ready-for-occupancy status.

Lanai replicates the charming appeal of the other residential buildings in Ohana Place: Honolulu, Maui, Anahola, Lanikai and Kauai. The seventh and last building, Hanalei, is also on schedule for completion and set for turnover in November.

Idyllic community

By then, the seven home clusters efficiently-spaced on a 3.34-hectare prime location on Aguinaldo Expressway, will emerge as an idyllic community of like-minded professionals and start-up families.

All buildings will boast five-star building and development features, issues like amenities such as a unique Polynesian flavor, top-of-the-line safety and security provisions, plus the signature advantages of modern, urban living premised and delivered by its developers, DMCI Homes.

The sixth building will blossom into a sanctuary that will welcome residents every day. The view of a lushly designed landscaped central atrium at the ground level beckons from the corridor balconies of all five floors, providing a refreshing green oasis for residents to complement the gorgeous landscape outside the building. This common area is also a place of convergence among neighbors, fostering the spirit of family rituals in Hawaiian, name, later to "Ohana."

Unit cuts, sizes

Inside their own units, residents can further fulfill their dream lifestyle, with generous unit cuts and sizes ranging from 56.50 to 76.50 square meters for the two-bedroom units and 90 sq m for the three-bedroom unit. This is perfect for professionals and newly married couples looking to put the right space to enjoy their upgraded standards of living.

For the growing family there are various units that measure up to 106 sq m that can accommodate more members while having enough space for various activities and living requirements. Lanai houses a total of 139 units with an average of 23 units per floor—offering a medium-density living proposition for the comfort and exclusivity of all residents. All units feature their own balcony and roof deck services over the eaves.

The rest of the building features convey both authentic and functional attributes, from the Hawaiian-inspired building façade and ornamental mirroring area as the upper ground floor, to the one-of-a-kind scenic elevator, single-loaded corridors for efficient lighting and ventilation, and basement parking, among others. These common areas will be professionally maintained by the Property Management office team, which will be on hand to provide other services to the residents.

Hawaiian-inspired amenities

Beyond the four corners of Lanai, residents can expect much more surprises to make their daily living a relaxing affair. Ohana Place offers a number of Hawaiian-inspired amenities such as the swimming pool with mound, water slide and cascades. Other features such as the basketball court, pocket parks, cabanas and outstanding deck are envisioned around the clubhouse named "Lanai Pavilion."

The pavilion contains clubhouse amenities for the exclusive use of all Ohana Place residents. Among these are a fitness gym, game room, receiving lobby, view deck and an air-conditioned multipurpose hall for social and corporate gatherings.

It is only a matter of time before Lanai conveys the laid-back appeal and character of the other complex buildings, filled with happy and fulfilled residents united by the spirit of Ohana.

DMCI Homes is the country's premier vertical housing developer that brings surefoot and themed communities within reach of urban families who want but limited residential options, but still aspire to achieve a comfortable, enriching quality of life prominent to their place of work.

OHANA PLACE offers a number of Hawaiian-inspired amenities such as the swimming pool with mound, water slide and cascades.

Environment-friendly . . .

From page B6-1

concluding today is hosting urban planners and architects as they share their insights on sustainable mass-scale environments and technologies.

The Green Forum 2010 is organized by LR Datos and Company Inc. (LaSol) in partnership with the Green Architecture Advocacy Philippines Inc. (Green AP).

"Using green isn't just a trend or a fad. We need to take on the challenge of climate change as an industry," Lizbeth D. Abais, managing director of LaSol, said in a statement.

She added that the Green Forum 2010 is a venue for local and the international practitioners of green and sustainable building design to share their best practices, knowledge and experience.

In-depth look

Themed "Green Interests: Matter (Planning to Neighborhood Development)," the "Green Forum 2010" takes an in-depth look at how the well-being of neighborhoods, families and businesses is hinged on a sustainable urban plan.

In a statement sent to Inquirer Property, Green AP Chair Ego Bello-made said sustainability must be examined both as its micro and macro-levels. "Environmental problems solved at the lower level of society equates to less problems to the higher level of society," Bellomade added. "On the other extreme, poor urban planning of the towns, cities and municipalities will support the green strategies attempted at the lower level."

For more information on Green Forum 2010, log on to http://www.manilacon.com or call 873-6262, 873-1847 and 873-8878 or e-mail info@laclaw.ca.com.

GRADUATION EXHIBIT
The Philippine School of Interior Design Graduating Class 2010 partners with Eastwood City for its graduation exhibit, "Catwalkscape" on Oct. 3-31, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. at the Atrium Building, Eastwood City, Libis, Quezon City. From left are Tata G. Tengan, AVP for marketing business development officer, Megaworld; Kevin L. Tan, head of Commercial Property division, Megaworld; Stephanie Tan-Ligot, PSID batch 2010 president; Marian Elissa Florentino, external vice president; and Lorraine Noelle Fresnoza, secretary.

Green low . . .

From page B6-1

and studies have shown that they reduce the cost of mechanical cooling by large spaces.

As last resorts, these fans operate at a higher speed to circulate the air and create a substantial temperature. Building occupants are cooled by the breeze even if the temperature has not been lowered, thus making them feel cooler and more comfortable.

To make the fan operate efficiently, some basic rules must be followed such as the constant space between the fan and the ceiling. The recommended distance is 0.6 to 1 feet for optimum performance.

The recommended height of the fan from the floor is equal to twice the fan's diameter.

For comments or inquiries, e-mail amadeo.depaso@gmail.com.

FROM A POWER PLANT TO THE MOST STYLISH ADDRESS IN MANILA

ROCKWELL CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF DESIGN INNOVATION

The vision to transform a former power plant to one of the city's most elegant shopping centers. The audacity to create four high-rise luxury apartments in the midst of a crisis that still serve as an industry benchmark for quality and luxury living. This Rockwell legacy for the past 15 years will be upheld in decades to come, by continually pushing the boundaries of high-end luxury living.

In 2000, Rockwell Land redefined the Makati landscape through the West Block, the first block of residential towers in the Rockwell Center. Unheard of in the mid-90s, the West Block was boldly launched with four towers rising simultaneously with luxurious unit sizes of over 200 square meters.

West Block redefines the Makati landscape in 2000

Midway through the construction of this ambitious development, the Asian financial crisis struck. Undaunted, Rockwell powered through and completed all four towers as scheduled.

Ten years ago, Hidalgo Place, Lane Gardens, the Amorsolo Square and Rizal Tower rose impeccably elegant above the rest – marking the beginning of an exclusive and upscale urban address unthreatened by many.

From then on, Rockwell continued to surprise the market with exciting innovations, setting trends and raising the bar for local design and architecture. Rockwell Center boasts of exclusive tunnel access for residents to the upscale establishments in the Joya Retail Row, Block 9, the Rockwell Club, and the Power Plant Mall. With Joya Lofts and Towers, hype was elevated through the creation of loft-type units. The launch of the Z-shaped unit at the Number One Rockwell, which provides residents sprawling and spectacular views from both sides of the building, was yet another design breakthrough for this maverick developer.

Rizal Tower rising above West Block

And in 2010, Rockwell rejuvenates the face of Rockwell Center through the Edades Tower and Garden Villas inspired after National Artist Victorio Edades, the Father of Modern and Unconventional Filipino art. Rockwell once again defies real estate convention by introducing the Garden Villas, a cluster of 34 exclusive bi-level units that complements a 54-storey residential tower with lavish Garden Z-Loft Units hundreds of feet above the ground.

Rockwell's units command highest Makati rental yield

A seasoned property management team ensures that Rockwell's developments remain as fresh and vibrant as they were 10 years ago, while features such as 100% back-up power provision and a centralized security operation ensures that Rockwell remains the most exclusive and sought after address in the city.

It's not surprising then that Rockwell units command the highest rental yield in Makati. Rockwell not only boasts of the high appreciation value of their properties, but even of the area that surrounds it.

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Studying abroad, studying life

By Floriana L. Jimenez

TWENTY YEARS old, and about to leave school. It's just the right age to go on an adventure. You're young, you're curious, and you love the idea of being anywhere but here.

And yet, you might be too young—the "rents" in your age bracket taken among her adulthood hasn't materialized yet. In my case, I was (and still am) tied to a house with a family of five and living with a curfew. When you're young and the real world is not quite there yet, all you want is to dive in.

My escape, and what I consider my first foray into adulthood, was a 10-month study-abroad program at the International Christian University in Tokyo, sponsored by the Japan Student Services Organization.

For living 10 months in Japan, I set my graduation back an entire year, didn't graduate with my friends, drained dozens of people terribly hard to go through a maze of yen, paperwork to leave, and then go through more to come back. I don't regret the experience one bit.

Studying abroad is hardly a vacation, but don't what made the experience so amazing. The thrill of vacation, I think, is about escaping anchored to our homes. We recognize that we're not going to stay and so we accept: new places, having just enough of them to say, "Yes, we've been away." Home is routines and to-do lists, but vacations are about getting away from all of that.

But when you actually have to make a big move abroad, when you have to learn to survive and settle in on your own, home becomes more about you, rather than the familiarity of what's around you.

Coming to Japan

Studying abroad is a test of yourself and how you handle change. Coming to Japan completely different in Japanese made basic tasks a lot more exciting, to say the least. Finding change at any fast grocery trip was like thanks realistic: I picked up a clean-looking bottle in the condiments aisle and hoped that was it. It wasn't—it was smoking sake, which does NOT go in salads.

Living away from familiar faces was also a test of how much I could adapt in a new environment. People from back home know I can be quite stressed over faces, but I found out that if there's one thing I needed to be on my program, it was flexibility.

Once I made the resistance to find out and remember people's names, and got up the nerve to go say with them, I learned that making friends wasn't such a painful process. It just goes to show that the things you fear alone or tell yourself, like "I'm not very

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Fashion students transform white T-shirts into art

From a class project challenge, 6 SoFA students show their fashion creativity

By Rosanna Arenas
Contributor

ONE SHIRT always have wardrobe staples in their closet, like the LBD, a well-fitting blazer, the perfect pair of jeans, and the plain white T-shirt. These are examples of fashion classics that never go out of style.

The great white T-shirt acts like a blank canvas, where one can put and match anything to show off one's own personal style. Students of the School of Fashion and the Arts (SoFA) were challenged by an edgy take on the "White T-Shirt Project."

Turn rock ears to find an inspiration first, the artworks showcased in "Manifest 1.0 fest" (last July 29), and translate this "inspiration" by decon-structing a white tee. They were given a free hand to deconstruct, paint, rip, layer, dye and embellish the much-loved classic. Take a look at the results of the students' creativity and dare to make your own!

Nicky 'Nikolas' Roa
"Colette"
Style Motto: "Fashion is the closest thing I have to magic."

"With a sculpture of a ballerina as inspiration, I embraced the curvy bits and the dressed the dresses, after getting the base ready, I began cut-ting the shirt with pearls, sequins and beads. I draped clothes on it to make it look more dramatic and put summer tees to. I embellished the shoulder to introduce the feathers from the sculptured shirt."

Shayne Macali
"Grande Bon Elegant"
Style Motto: "There's elegance in simplicity."

"I was inspired by an artwork by Michele Birdsong. It was a painted crumpled piece of paper or fabric stark on the canvas. I intend to mimic the movement of the pieces by crumpling a piece of fabric and sewing it onto the shirt to create a dwindling around the collar."

David Bolos
"RAR Printwriting"
Style Motto: "Inspiration is endless. As much as possible I want to see what's happening in this outside world."

"The minute I saw Valerie Cordray's 'Wanderers,' I knew that would be my inspiration. She used unconventional materials to convert rich human emotions to create her masterpiece. I've used a mix of hand-painting, leather-dropping and hand-embroidery to invoke a variety of feelings and to ignite a sense of passion and confidence."

Dan Dionisio
"Blue Hindia"
Style Motto: "Fashion inspires others you think can't or else is uninspired."

"The experimental outdoor drapes depicts the spiritual journey and in the printing chosen as my inspiration is Splatter by Jackson Rosco 20'. The basic men's medium size T-shirt drapes were stitched on creased drapes."

Dan Concepcion
"Untitled"
Style Motto: "Style and self expression always prevail over fashion."

"Inspired by the painting, The Glimpsing," which highlights the bare male physique. I used jersey corsets to characterize the shadows on the male form. Using bias piping to define its contours."

Nicole Aquino
"We Refuse to Tattoo and Pierce"
Style Motto: "Style is subjective. Trust and be confident with your choices."

"I took elements from the set work, 'How do you marry a Wild woman' by Cynthia Alexander and patterned my work after the bird woman's wedding dress. I created a spin out of tulle to represent the wedding gown. Next I cut off the sleeves and collar to make it more feminine and I added flowers as roses to represent the entourage."

Erwan Heussaff–stylishly male

By Carbert Catacutan
Correspondent

WITH A BROODING quality reminiscent of the 1950's bad boys, you would picture half-French and half-Filipino Erwan Heussaff as some sort of a romantic artist. He is actually employed, working in-head of purchasing for an integrated services company.

He wears a coat and tie on most days, instead of the bikers jacket you would picture him as. Adding to his impressive CV, Erwan is a tattoed chef. He has traveled the world to learn various cuisines and methods of cooking. You only have to check his blog, thefrenchfilipinocook.blogspot.com, to have a sample of his culinary abilities.

For now, this 23-year-old finds his "save, quiet" home in Manila. He shares with us how the head of a purchasing department can look like he just got off a motorcycle while still being ostensibly cool and collected.

What is your go-to outfit on lazy days?

Rugged jean shorts, brown Moccasins, a white V-Neck shirt and a navy and V-3 cardigan. Anything I can slop on decidedly and still look somewhat like a wannabe hipster.

What has been your worst style moment?

I once bought a gold chair in Bangkok and thought it was cool. I wore it one night out and people shocked asking me if it was a welcome. I lied and said, "Yes, of course!"

Is there such a thing as bad style for you?

Really out and white loose fitting t-shirts!

What brands should be retired by now?

Those weird pants that are really tight and short on the sides and hug bad tagging at the crotch area. I just don't get it.

If looks aren't important, I never believe why shouldn't be. However, I don't understand when people wear jerseys (of any sport) with names and numbers of the back for everyday use. I mean, I get wearing them at a game, but to go to a mall or to a restaurant? You've lost me there.

What's your favorite thing to wear (shoes)?

I like all my casual-ish clothes. My thick knitted cardigans, my long pullovers, my hoodies, my worn-out jeans and tattered shorts. I have a thing for suits.

What is the second-look of your style?

Local Natives, Bon Iver and The Middle East. And anything that's seen best fan-in old soul.

Which male celebrity (seriously) needs to rethink the way he dresses?

I don't really follow celebrity fashion. I do watch Best Fit on Zoo. Those would dress badly that way we wouldn't constantly be compared to them.

Being a French-Filipino, what from both cultures have influenced the way you dress?

"The French culture has influenced my penchant for clothes consisting of dressier pant, simple-looking pieces and classical, time-tested garments. The Filipino culture puts me wearing slippers and short shorts."

French men and Filipino men—any differences in terms of style?

The French are more confident in defining their own style. Whatever they wear, he still looks effortless and befitting. Most Filipino men are still very timid to go certain colors or cuts because it may go against society's norms. I find that Filipino men dress in what they are told to wear (by magazines, social groups, peers) and haven't had the opportunity to explore what they would want to feel comfortable wearing. Of course, this a general statement that doesn't apply to all French or to all Filipinos.

I wouldn't introduce my girlfriend to my parents if she was wearing ...

All the fashionable rompers I know cringe at the sight of kitten heels, so I guess I'll follow suit and say kitten heels!

Does your mom ever think your jeans are too tight? What does she look with what you wear?

I don't own any of those hard-to-walk, hard-to-breathe-in jeans. They are a real no-no considering for my liking. My mom doesn't really give me much grief anymore, but she used to hate it when I would attempt to wear slippers for every occasion.

Couples with matching outfits—cute or annoying?

I think it's cute when it's tastefully done. Matching tshirts, for instance. But I am absolutely and categorically against the same-sized clothes. Subconscious pet peeve maybe.

Don't you think every guy should have to attract a girl?

A cute dog or an adorable baby nephew or niece. Clothing-wise? Thick-frame glasses. It makes the vapid-looking ones appear brighter.

"Every guy should have thick-frame glasses to attract girls; it makes the vapid-looking ones appear brighter."

FRIDAY: ERRANDS DAY

BEANIE from Pinoy Pinoy, flannel polo shirt by Billionaire, T-shirt from Topman, vintage shorts by Levi's, shoes by Pearl Jewels

Proudly Pinoy in Harvard

By Kara Vital Gangoso
Student correspondent, Ateneo de Manila

IT'S NOT every day that we hear stories of Filipinos journeying halfway around the world into the city halls of one of the world's most prestigious schools and doing good there.

Here, three recent Harvard Business School MBA graduates share their experiences studying abroad, their hopes and dreams for the country and how it was to be a Pinoy in Harvard.

Jennifer Anne Kelly

Describe the Harvard campus.

The campus itself is stunning, and its location by the Charles River is beautiful. It's all you can ever wish for. The library is amazing, as is the student housing. The classroom is really conducive and my favorite part is the faculty. They're absolutely wonderful. Their ability to facilitate discussion in class and their openness and willingness to talk to students who want to pop by their office to ask questions. You can go in there and talk about life, what you want in life, what inspires you.

How's the Filipino community there?

We have a very tight community and we make sure we're in touch with a broader community like those from Harvard College, Law School, Kennedy School, etc., to make sure that all the Filipinos gather together several times a year. We either cook or order Filipino food, which is the best thing because you miss Filipino cuisine after a while.

When Ondoy struck the Filipino community in Harvard really worked together to raise funds for the victims. We were part of the student calamity fundraising project which was able to raise $25,000 for the victims. It was really inspiring how engaged Filipino students are even abroad. You can see how much passion they have about the country.

How's your academic load? What do you do in school?

The coursework requires reading a lot of books, but for leisure we love to travel. Our group of Filipinos and also the South East Asian group have gone to Europe, south of France, Miami, Jamaica, Argentina. The best part of school is having free time, about a couple of days in a week off, and having a group of friends that are all happy to explore the world.

What does it take for someone to survive in this highly competitive environment?

It takes a lot of discipline, not just in your studies, but in learning both within and outside the classroom. Fifty percent of your grade is just participation, so you have to be on all the time. You need confidence to convince people about your ideas. It's very similar in real life. The entire class is composed of 900 students, and we're divided into 10 sections. Harvard made sure each class is a cross section of various viewpoints, so there's someone in the group for finance, an engineer, etc., and I think we can learn something new every day.

What is your advice for the Filipino youth?

Dream big. Dream as big as you can ever dream of. If you think you're dreaming big enough, dream even bigger because you're young and there are so many opportunities and the world is in the palm of your hands. Don't let anything stop you.

Oliver Segovia

Why did you decide to go to Graduate School?

During my undergraduate years, I had 3 career paths in mind: consulting, private equity and real estate. Coming out of the Ateneo taught me about liberal arts, how to think about world, and a good appreciation of how the world works. I was always passionate about real estate growing up because it's the one thing you can touch. It's because there are only a few industries that affect people in a fundamental way.

I saw the MBA as a way of learning more about those passions, getting the skills I need to succeed in that field, and knowing people who work in those industries.

Business is a very competitive and cerebral endeavor. You have to know different people, learn from different perspectives, as I applied.

How was the application process?

I submitted a resume along with essays, letters of recommendation from employers or from people who know me well, and I had an interview. The toughest part for me was the essays, because you are given limited space and a limited question to answer. On the surface, the questions (i.e., describe your three greatest achievements in 600 words) seem simple but it's pretty hard to answer because it takes a lot of introspection.

Harvard wasn't looking for people who can easily talk about how great they are or how smart they are or have much they've already achieved, because there's a lot more people like that. But to dig really deep and figure out what really motivates you, what's your purpose in life, having that level of self-awareness to be able to talk candidly and get some lessons out of that was pretty challenging.

Now that you've graduated, what are your plans?

I'm setting a bank, which started out as a project in school for the new few months. It's about leadership and the future of business education which will be published by the Harvard Business School Press. I am planning on pursuing a full-time career in real estate.

How can you help the country given your background and training?

We had a run in school on political economy, where we had to study the Philippines as a country and about our 10 million overseas Filipino workers and their remittances. Telling them about the OFW story was frustrating and also unbelievable for them, because they could not imagine the number of broken families there are because so many were forced to work abroad.

Perhaps, by telling the world more about the Philippines, more people would want to invest here, go as tourists and study what we've achieved. Also, by learning as much as I can from the best real estate firms, the best countries that are known for their real estate practices, the level of professionalization in those industries and by adopting it back home, I can put them all in the book.

I say to the youth, keep on learning because if there's anything I've learned, it's that I don't know anything yet. It's a very humbling experience but Harvard Business School taught me how to learn. That's the skill of being very open, being hungry for information, hungry to learn from people, places, companies, etc., in a community and structured way, and finally of being able to help other people learn as well.

Paolo Campos III

How do you find studying in Harvard?

I was an undergrad in Princeton before enrolling at the Harvard MBA program, so I had a fantastic of what to expect since I had to do a lot of adjusting being the only Pinoy at Princeton at that time. Studying abroad and virtually on my own forced me outside of my comfort zone, which allowed me to grow as a person. It heightened my sense of being a Filipino, and the experience convinced me to come home and reinforces the fact that this is my country. I do have a responsibility to do what I can to make things better.

What were the difficulties you encountered?

There's definitely being home sick and missing family and friends. As much as I was able to learn from other people from elsewhere, at the end of the day, you're always at home. That was the challenge, having to live independently without your security blanket.

But it was also very fulfilling to meet such amazing people from all over the world. School was very tough academically, but Filipinos are very well equipped to be very competitive in an academic setting. We are a very global people, primarily speaking, we have a variety of cultural influences as a nation. Filipinos can hold their own academically or otherwise, despite the challenges.

Who is your favorite world leader?

Barack Obama. He went down when he got elected, we had just started school. I think he's a strategy-up against the challenges of school is, scarier, he was a masterful campaigner, and really got people to rally around his vision. Words are one thing, actions are another but just being in the States I really saw a shift from people being apathetical and not caring about politics during the Bush years, mid-slow Ulba. He came along and people started to care...substitute for him or against him.

President Noynoy Aquino is a transformative figure in the same mould as Obama, and he got people to rally around his vision, too. The challenge for him, like Obama, is to make the shift from the confidence of hope to being an effective administration.

Dream big. If you think you're dreaming big enough, dream even bigger because you're young

If you were to send P-Noy a message, what would it be?

Focus on the private sector to be the engine of growth. Fulfill your promise to stamp out corruption. Because it exhibits investments when there's a lot of red tape. As a foreign or local investor, you won't have much confidence in the government that allows graft to flourish.

Also, look for ways to expand public-private partnerships. That's the way to go. Take advantage of the renewed interest in the Philippines because so fiscally constrained as we are in the government side of things, there's just so much potential from the private sector to really play the role.

Also, we need to leverage OFW/ Filipino overseas because they have so much skills and by encouraging them to come home and set up businesses here, we can take that into a positive force for change in the country.

What advice can you give to the youth?

Believe that the world is your oyster. Youre only limited by how expansive your thinking is, how expansive your hopes and dreams are. Have a goal that you really believe in, and everything comes from that. Talk to people who're the same career path, learn from those who've come before you. Don't be afraid to pursue that idea which will change the world. When you do that, everything else will fall into place.

Don't get discouraged by the fact that schools in the US are very expensive. Look for full-ride scholarships, because for those that can qualify and may lack the means, they give out grants.

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Studying abroad, studying life

From page 1

friendly" or "I'm not very good with people" won't hold true.

Being forced to adapt to new situations—and succeeding—is a great way to break out of the old rules that you've fallen into.

Perks

For one thing, having a study abroad experience on your resume is impressive. It shows employers that you're adventurous, that you have the capacity for independence, and that you have a unique experience under your belt. If you've got a foreign language and good grades to show for it, even better.

Proof that you've been granted a scholarship, in that you're qualified for a selective program, also says that you've made a good impression on other people. All of these things make you a more sound choice when you face potential employers or grad school admissions boards.

Living abroad might give you proficiency in another language, and this may increase your job options in the future. After 10 months of intensive Japanese, I'm far from being a fluent reader and writer, but I can definitely hold a conversation.

I haven't found a real niche for the language here yet (or here, beyond reading menus at Japanese restaurants), but I think my foreign language can be a useful skill later on.

Applications

As for the step-by-step I got into the program, it isn't so exciting as the program itself. Finding a program was just a matter of keeping an eye out for it. I found out about my school's call for applications from a memo on my department's bulletin board, because I make it a point to stop by and check for announcements, job listings or scholarship programs.

Even if a currently offered program doesn't suit you, try to find out the name of the office that takes care of international exchanges. Like any other application process, the application just needed lots of paperwork and willingness to sweat.

Applying is a matter of patiently jill the petitioned paperwork and handing it in on time. There are usually copies of your transcripts, recommendations from teachers or employers, a résumé, and an accomplished application form. A personal statement isn't always requested, but it can be a very important document. It serves as an intro- ch- ces of your personality, what you want out of the programme, and why they should help you achieve it.

A neat step may be an interview, where you should show that you're articulate and at ease around people. Different programs have different requirements, so take every step as a chance to really impress the organizers of the program and work towards getting accepted.

A crucial question for people who want to study abroad is, how am I going to pay for it? Finding for study abroad (covering tuition at a school abroad, accommodation, living allowances, and airfare) is always an option, but that option is extremely expensive.

Instead, opt for a funded program. Many organizations offer programs that cover tuition, airfare, visa costs, and other large expenses that you'll incur while studying abroad.

FINDING a new look and some new friends outside Meiji Jingu Shrine, one of the hotspots of cosplay in Tokyo

LOOKING for luck in Nara. Crawling through a supposedly lucky hole in a giant statue in Todaiji Temple

Whatever program you choose to attend, keep in mind that the quality of the experience is up to you. Treat the application process, to that frightening first flight one, as the interviewers flight back home. there's something to learn from every part. Even if the experience isn't picture-worthy all the time, I guarantee that you'll be glad you went on an crazy adventure while you were young.

Quick guide to international study programs

THIS IS just a partial list of study abroad programs open to Filipino students. There are plenty of other programs and locations out there, so look around online and find one that suits you. Good luck!

Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) Scholarship

Sponsored by: JASSO, a non-governmental organization in Japan affiliated with the Ministry of Education, and affiliate schools in Japan

Host Country: Japan

Quick Description: The JASSO Scholarship is offered to students all over the world who want to study in Japan. To get the scholarship, you must be accepted at an exchange student in a Japanese university who will then recommend your name to the foundation. Consult your school regarding exchange agreements that they have with Japanese universities. Application deadlines vary from school to school, but keep an eye out for applications around January to February.

Website: http://www.jasso.go.jp/ryuni_e.html

Global Undergraduate Exchange Program Awards

Sponsored by: The US Department of State, the Philippine-American Educational Foundation in the Philippines, and World Learning, Inc. in the US

Host Country: United States

Quick Description: This undergraduate exchange program aims to expose young scholars from Latin America, East Asia and the Pacific to life in the United States. Application season is usually from September to October, and everything goes through the Philippine-American Educational Foundation.

Website: http://www.hrdept.ph.org.ph/

SEAPEP

Sponsored by: Japan, in cooperation with ASEAN member countries

Institution/s Country: Various ASEAN countries and Japan

Quick Description: This ship for the Southeast Asian Students Program is an annual youth exchange program that gathers over 300 youth leaders from ASEAN countries and Japan to provide the youth with the opportunity to visit ASEAN countries, to deepen mutual understanding and establish friendship with their counterparts. While on country visits, they undertake various activities such as courtesy call, interaction with local youth, international trade, and homestay with local families. Applications from March to April.

Website: http://www.youth.upd.edu.ph/~police/international.php

How to get that Harajuku look!

HARAJUKU, JAPAN's fashion capital, is renowned for its unique street fashion. Trendy teens flock to it on weekends.

Here is how to put together your own Harajuku look.

Gothic Lolita: It's sweet meets goth chic inspired by Victorian porcelain dolls. Wear frilly, ruffled knee-length dresses in black, white or soft pastel colors. Dressy aprons and corsets; lacy knee socks; and chunky mary-janes or lace-up boots.

To accessorize with tiny top hats, bejeweled headbands, dainty jewelry, parasols and enormous bows. Style your hair in pigtails or up-do with lots of ribbons and maybe a ruffled eyeglass or back-combed pigtails; dark eyeliner or an elaborate eyeliner design; dark, jewel-toned makeup; and even small tattoos.

Punk: Also called "Visual Kei" as inspired by Avril Lavigne's flunky. The look incorporates asymmetric and multilayered, as the style takes inspiration from rock bands, who are mostly male.

Hair is the most important part of the Harajuku punk look. It has to be extreme. Spiky wild hairstyles with crazy colors, long bangs, and unnaturally straight cuts, with hair sticking out in all directions. Eyeliners and dark lipstick are a must.

As for clothing, think convertible top jackets; metallic vests; pantsuits; leather pieces, striped pants, and Vivienne boots.

Kawaii and Decora: Kawaii styles are inspired by childlike playfulness, with clothes that appear to be made for young children, or clothes inspired by cute cartoon characters; animal hoodies; tutus worn on bottom; furry tails; and accessories to match.

Decora, short for "Decoration" is a subgenre of Kawaii achieved with layers of clothing; preferably pink, and lots of accessories; bright colored hairclips, plastic jewelry, bells and cutesy toys.

Gyaru and Gyaru-Oh: Gyaru and Gyaru-Oh styles are modern Harajuku styles that emerged in the 2000s. Inspired by Western influences and seen to be a rebellion against the Japanese aesthetic.

Gangaru is inspired by the ghetto girl look: bleached hair, long nails, thick and extreme fakes, pastel eyeshadows, false eyelashes, facial gems, platform sandals or boots, bright colored tops, shorts and mini skirts and lilac-purple shades.

The Gyaru style is California girl hippie: blonde hair, pale or tan, lots of makeup, tank tops and mini skirts, tube dresses, flip flops or high-heeled sandals, cowboy hats, the latest gadgets and designer labels.

For info on the anime festival, call tel. nos. 890-6001 or 896-9982; e-mail info@animecon.com.

SMILE in Decora Harajuku style is mine, achieved by layers of pink clothes, bright colored hair clips, plastic jewelry, bells and furry toys

Editor Thelma Sioson San Jose Subeditors Lydee Pare Pastor

LIFESTYLE

style . urban living . pop culture . entertainment . recreation

Two hairdressers fight over an iPod

A pair of employees at a hair salon in Quezon City played tug-of-war with each other's hair to see who can get a free iPod. According to salon customers, the owner of the shop offered 900 Globe points as a prize to the winner. The two hairdressers needed the points to get an iPod from My Rewards, My Globe.

With a variety of gadgets, handsets, free rewards and more to choose from, collecting points has never been this exciting. No wonder more and more people want to get points faster.

Now, getting those points you need is made even easier! Just ask your family or friends to text SHARE <space> your 10-digit cell number <space> the number of points they'll share with you and send to 4438.

By asking for points, you can get that new gadget you've always wanted. Free gift certificates, or passes to theme parks or cinemas. The sooner you get the points, the faster you get the rewards from My Rewards, My Globe and TM Astig Rewards.

So ask, beg, do antics or just keep loading for more points!

You can also call 730-1000 or visit www.globe.com.ph/rewards to find out more details.

Or you can challenge any of your friends to an arm-wrestling contest next time to exchange for more points!

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Remembering Alexis

He touched the lives of many for such a life cut short by a brutal murder

By Kean Belleza
Contributor

COLLEGE is the time we get an inkling of who we are to become. It's almost like a new sense sports out and you're picking up interests, events, hints from the humdrum of everyday that will lead you to where you should be. It's in a compelling subject, a spiritual song, a memorable sex break. Most of us get clues from the people who cross our paths, especially those we call our friends.

I met Iggy on the first year of college, both wide-eyed idealists, we hoisted over coffee, talks and movies. I remember the one we felt silver screaming, "Amerikazo Beauty." We followed it up with films like "Dyanghing Espesyo," "Requiem for a Dream," "I 'Ta Metna Tambien," and countless others. Pretty soon, we had become part of an underground club called Bench Young Cinema where we screened alternative movies weekly. While my appreciation of film stayed at a very enthusiastic fondness, he soared to full-blown love.

He talked about film consistently, dropping names like Akira Kurosawa, Lav Diaz and Federico Fellini into conversations about strudels, Calvados, screw teachers and such. It would get grating at times, but unless all that talk about obscure films gets, he was just a really awesome guy to be around. Considerate, smart and funny, he once gave me a ridiculous book-sized picture of him to help stand off my fifth. We graduated in 2004. I started my career as a copywriter in the largest multinational advertising agency in the country while he rose to become the Philippines' youngest practicing film critic. Only 25, he was being invited to talk about Southeast Asian cinema around the world.

Iggy was a critic not just of film but of life. He was the kind of person who saw the world as it should be, never settling for what is a ostensibly. He'd attach personal issues the same way he attacked the Metro Manila Film Fest, petitioning to kill it for its mediocrity. He knew smoking was bad, he'd take your cigarettes and toss it in bath. He didn't like your boyfriend, he'd tell you about it. At one point, he tried to get me out of advertising—which he considered an evil of society in the guise of a road rip, he lured me into coming with him and his filmmaker friend Mikhail to Tagaytay. Once we were there, I was bombarded with questions like: "Why are you in advertising?" "Is this making you happy?" "Tell me one good thing about advertising."

Without a doubt, Iggy had the best intentions. He expected the best from his friends. Fun of not a series of arguments, I decided I didn't want any more solutions. So I employed the best method of offense I knew; the time-tested art of silent treatment. No more coffee catch-ups, film viewings over pizza, or even an online "What's up?" When Iggy was born around, I'd deliberately veer away. I knew that I just needed time to grow into my own person—a more mature me who was better suited to stand up to the ever-critical Iggy.

Eventually, we started posting again, testing the waters of our friendship, but never going to too deep. I remember seeing him from a distance at the Greenhills Film Festival. He looked happy with his girlfriend Mika. I smiled a hello, in no hurry to just the crowds to have a real conversation. In my head, he was just there anyway. He'd be there. It's years later when Chad a family and my kids would refer to him as the "Tito" who talked about film nonstop. So I walked off not knowing that it would be the last time I would see him alive.

Sept. 1, 2009. In a scene it typically relates to happening on Tv docuseries, Iggy who everyone knew as Alexis Tioseco, and his girlfriend Mika Reblora were stabbed and shot in his house in Quezon City.

At the funeral, I kept profusely it's not just because I had lost one of my best friends, but because I lost him a year earlier than everyone else. I remember watching "Ten Sunset Boulevard," a black and white film about a girl and her donkey. Afterward, he asked me in his usual manner, "What do you think?" and like so many times before, I looked at him with an exasperated expression: "I don't get it! What does it mean?" He sighed, most assuredly: "You don't have to get it. You just have to feel it." What I would give to watch one more difficult art film with him.

One of the last memorable talks with Iggy he told me that I inspired him to start writing because I was the first one to believe in him. How strange that he ended up believing in the talents of so many other people including me. Now, I am the one waiting for heavens, the very newspaper that gave him his first break. Writing this, I know that he has left a lot of people behind who still don't get it. But we're all definitely still feeling it.

(Editor's note: One year after Alexis Tioseco and Mika Reblora's murder remains unsolved.)

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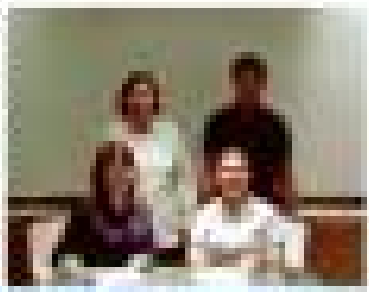

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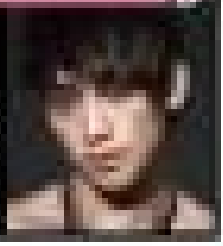
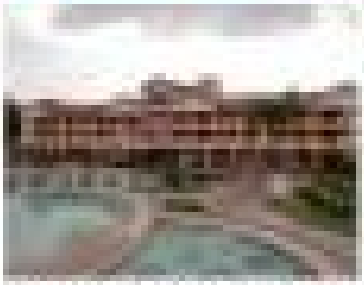
Rain comes to Manila



Tours, Leisure & Chow



Justice for Alexis and Nika

Photos by Greg Baños and Jay Capati

LAST SEPT. 1, a rainy Wednesday evening, the friends and family of Alexis Troncoso gathered for a memorial service at Dapitan St., in the house where Alexis died.

It was exactly a year since he and his girlfriend Nika Robles were murdered, but their friends and families continue to seek justice.

Candles were lit, footage of Alexis' TV interviews were played and Mike de Leon's "Kung Mangarap Ka't Magising" was screened.

Everyone shared a long moment of silence at 11 p.m.—approximately the time Alexis and Nika were killed.

Earlier that evening, Alexis' brother Chris read a statement from the Troncoso family. Here are excerpts:

FRIENDS and family of Alexis gather in his home for a memorial service.

"It has been a year of no answers. More so, it has been a year with even more questions.

"...There has been no thorough investigation nor has there been any significant movement on the case. It was only last month that the warrant for the alleged accomplice, Cristelle Deguia, was issued by the Quezon City courts. To this day, it has not been implemented and the woman remains at large.

"My brother Alexis loved the Philippines, not just its cinema. He would've opted to go to Canada where the rest of the family currently resides but he chose to remain in the Philippines, the country he considered his own. He was Filipino and never considered himself as anything but Filipino. He's also buried here.

"But appeal in the current administration, whom we believe is unsure and insidious in its aims of making a better and safer Philippines. We know they because we have been neighbors with the Aquino family for the last three decades. There is only eight days down from where we are tonight. We believe in President Noynoy Aquino as much as we believed in his mother, Cory whose death has put greatly affected Alexis.

"We pray that not another year goes by with still no answers or movement on the murder of my brother and Nika... we will not settle for anything less than a thorough and convicting investigation. How can we not strive for justice for my brother and Nika, who died with the love of Our country in their hearts?"

The very next day, Thursday, Alexis' siblings Chris and Jessica Troncoso, their lawyer and Alexis' friends Greg Bañez and Ernie Reinado met with new NBI Director designate Leo Jesus Magno at the NBI Director assigned no investigator to the case, giving the friends and family of Alexis and Nika hope that they are one step closer to justice.

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Editor Thelma Sinson San Juan Associate Editor Pam Pastor
SUPER LIFESTYLE

Foursquare is not my mother

By Tonio Pang
Lead Model

A FEW evenings after leaving just graduated from college, I said goodbye to my dad as I was on my way out to meet friends. He was asking me where I was going when he suddenly shook his head and said, "Oh, I'm not going to ask where you're off to. You're an adult now." He patted me on the head and went back to watch TV.

So, now that I'm pushing 30, who is there an application that wants to know where I am constantly?

Foursquare is a social networking application built around members "checking in" at their current locations, which are then broadcast via Twitter, Facebook or both. Users earn badges, which mark significant milestones in a Foursquare area, e.g. Newbie for your first ever check-in or Swarmed, which is unlocked after 10+ check-ins in 12 hours (who manages to be in 10 different places in 12 hours?). If you check in a particular venue the most in a span of 60 days and you become the "Mayor."

For a more social experience, Foursquare-ers checking in can also leave tips about the place. Some users who've checked in a restaurant can leave info on which dishes are a must to order or even which toilet seater to avoid.

While I'm normally one of the first to jump in on any new social network, communities and get instantly hooked, Foursquare did not at all appeal to me.

Call me old-fashioned, but I prefer learning new friends by exercise at the mall versus knowing where they eat and going there to "bump into" them. I rely on several apps, I find the thought of people knowing where I am creepy.

FOURSQUARE gives you the control of checking into a place, but in the hands of over-sharers, it can be a tool of annoyance.

While Foursquare gives you the control of checking into a place, in the hands of over-sharers, it can be a tool of annoyance. I mean, who cares that you've become the mayor of your office? All that says about you is that you're probably a procrastinating workaholic who logged on to Foursquare to avoid that report your boss has been hounding you about.

Given that I spend a lot of time holed up in coffee shops working on deadlines, I can just imagine the havoc Foursquare will wreak on my attempt to work when well-meaning friends drop by for a chat since they're in the area, especially since I've discovered that nothing invites long, deep conversation than you fixated to a book ("Oh, what are you reading? Did you read Da Vinci Code? I love Twilight.") or typing rapidly on a keyboard with a scowl on your face ("Wow, what are you working on? An article? What's that for?").

Of course, the upside of Foursquare overshadowing is that I know which places to steer clear of when in search I don't fancy seeing chicks in. You realize your yearning for midlife is out that had others you see that first annoying person you follow on Twitter just checked in the restaurant you were about to go to.

I'll probably be changing my tune in the future when Foursquare becomes more business-oriented, i.e. when establishment start using the application to track loyal customers and offer incentives, the way Globe recently did when they invited users to check in to a specified checkpoint, whenever because there were not just a badge but a Samsung Galaxy S, too. It would be cool to have your favourite bar thank you for the continued patronage by sending you a pitcher of bubble wings after your refurbishes.

But for now, leave me alone, Foursquare. You don't need to know where I am all the time, you're not my mother.

GARFIELD BY JIM DAVIS

A. LUPIN BY JEO ABELLANA

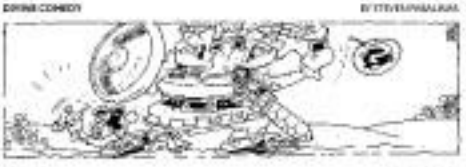
PUGAD BABOY BY PAT LIGSAY

DICK TRACY

LOVEHOOTS BY ELIZABETH SCHORNSTEIN

JAMES BOND

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVE VANHALAKAS

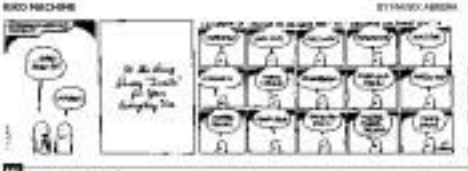


BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

TULDOK BY MARA COLL

BEN BY DANIEL DALISTAN

BIRD MACHINE BY MARC ARBON



SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Success is easy to achieve. Public and social forces favor you and your friends. Be in the know. Be open to unexpected social forces. Trends you want to get close to.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Co-workers will be unusually helpful. Your ideas will be well received. Your health is good. Health matters: others will be unusually sympathetic if you're ill.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) This is a wonderful day for the arts, as well as for romance. Your intuition is on point. You feel understood by others. You're also very creative. Work with your intuitive sense.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) You'll enjoy having friends/family for your home today. Creativity, your talents are favored. Home-making project. Handyman matters: call in somebody more talented. (It's a good day to entertain at home.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) This is an excellent day for writing, editing and recommending gift ideas. Privacy is favored, and friendly forces everywhere.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) You'll be tempted to spend more than you should. Don't do it. Be careful with your money today. (Old Margie Black's true love will be generous to others.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) This is the kind of day to expect love at home and/or romantic. Your creative expression flows easily with the ideas and what could be spiritual. You also feel understood. Leave room for playfulness.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) It's easy to put the wishes of others before your own today. What you want will be easy, considering with everyone. Relax and you'll find. (This is an excellent)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Romance with others is especially favorable. Be open to new and unpredictable things. Be willing to help out, and receive help in turn. Harm.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Romance with your boss or someone who is older or richer is likely today. You might see your influence leap forward.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) Romance over associations of friends is heightened today, give yourself to them a chance to socialize, collaborate. Beautiful and romantic challenges are possible (with a budget).

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) It's easy to be generous to others today, especially those closest to you. Involved complaints or financial problems, especially problems with in-laws. Tonight, if you can do something to help others, do so!

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

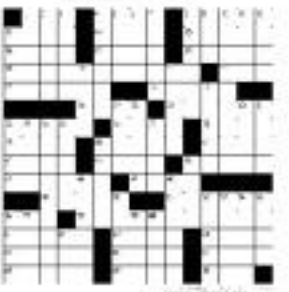
Answer to previous puzzle

7	1	4	6	9	3	5	8	2
2	9	5	8	7	1	6	3	4
8	6	3	5	4	2	7	1	9
4	5	2	9	1	7	3	6	8
6	3	9	2	8	4	1	5	7
1	8	7	3	6	5	9	4	2
5	7	1	4	3	6	8	2	9
9	2	8	7	5	9	4	7	3
3	4	6	1	2	8	2	9	5

Concepts Sudoku

		1	5	7	8	3		
2							9	
1			9				6	
3		4		7			2	
5			8				7	
9							8	
		7	3	5	9	4		

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



WORTHIER anything find in the restaurant: gourmet-buttered sarsaparilla and ginger ale

THE menu offers mostly Korean-style fried chicken and drumsticks—a new offering to the local landscape.

CHICKEN Charlie is worth the trip to Banawe for unusual, scrumptious chicken.

Checkpoint Charlie

No need to fly, Chicken Charlie finally brings Korean-style fried chicken to Manila

Text and photos by Bianca Consunji

A FEW months ago, I asked friends for suggestions on places to eat when I returned from New York. One of them, a reverential foodie, sent me a list of 6 dream places in my complete with detailed descriptions and addresses. It was a pretty comprehensive list, filled with items and gourmet mac-and-cheese and cupcakes, but one thing caught my eye because she was so enthusiastic about it:

"Get Bonchon Chicken. The original Bonchon is in Koreatown, and it's called Mad For Chicken. You can get Bonchon at Boba at St. Mark's, so I suggest you go there. OMG, Bianca, if you don't try the soy garlic Bonchon chicken you are missing half your life. I mean it."

It was a formidable threat, but when I finally found myself in the same area as the restaurant, I was already full of pan-seared sandwiches and snack pie from Mooncakes. I left New York without tasting the famous Korean-style soy garlic chicken—thus, forcing me to remember I really missed half my life.

Months later, word about a new joint in Banawe started making the rounds. Slugs started comparing it to "New York's Bonchon Chicken," although I have discovered that the title was a misnomer because Bonchon Chicken is apparently the name of a fried chicken franchise in Korea, much like KFC. Korean-style fried chicken, sans the double-frying technique to produce a crisp layer of skin, comparable to oblong duck.

Chicken Charlie, a small dine-in and take-away restaurant in Banawe, has a small menu that focuses almost exclusively on Korean fried chicken. However, the 35 year-old Boro Pia, who owns and runs the joint, prefers me to label it as such. "We do get compared to Bonchon; I would rather call it double-fried chicken than Korean," he explains. "I brought the technique back from the US because Filipinos love fried chicken, and I feel this is the best fried chicken out there."

But what makes double-fried chicken different from the available versions on the market?

FOODIES on a budget can try out the P9 pure rice bowl, which consists a bed of crisp chicken bits glazed with soy-garlic sauce.

CUTE strings buckets serve as repositories for the discarded chicken bones.

"Chicken Charlie serves crispier fried chicken without the thick breading," Yo says. "The chicken we serve has less grease compared to the other Banawe stir frying technique blame a significant amount of chicken for that is naturally present in chicken."

The crisp, biting flesh like chicken is then coated in a soy-garlic sauce and is served with pickled radish, which results in a distinctly Asian flavor—nothing like the breaded American fried chicken many Filipinos are familiar with. Chicken Charlie offers only drumsticks and wings, so don't be surprised if you polish off six chicken wings in one sitting. Have them with their potato wedges or steamed rice, and wash it down with a bottle of cold school sarsaparilla.

Prices are reasonable, as a recommendation of four wings and four drumsticks costs 360 pesos—but be prepared to fight it out if you're sharing the order with another hungry person.

The only catch is that the orders take about 15 minutes, as each batch is cooked upon order. However, the dish manages to stay crisp even after a couple of hours, so seasoned consumers know to call ahead and pick up their orders instead of waiting it out at the restaurant. So says that there will be new additions to the menu soon, but after one bite of the delicious duck and its tangy, savory-salty sauce, I figured that I really didn't need to try anything else.

Chicken Charlie is at 982-A N.S. Amoranto St. Cor. Banawe St. Quezon City. Call 742-2222 or visit www.chickencharlie.net. E-mail chickencharlie@yahoo.com.

Five events to enjoy 2010 Grand Prix Singapore

EXPECT Singapore to pulsate with raw, intense energy this September as race aficionados, music fans, fashionistas and party goers converge for the lifestyle extravaganza of the 2010 Grand Prix Season Singapore (GPSS). With fast cars, live entertainment spectacles, glamorous fashion shows and grand parties, this year's Singapore F1 circuit will drive the senses viscerally to unforgettable experiences at Asia's ultimate lifestyle and entertainment destination from Sept. 17 to 26.

Visitors to the Lion City on these dates can make the most out of their trip and soak in the F1 fever with the many thrilling events lined up.

Series of concerts from international artists

Bolstar performers in Hollywood will grace the spotlight at the famous Marina Bay street circuit with their concerts as part of performances during the GPSS. Multi-award winning and American top female hip-hop singer Missy Elliot and idol Daughtry will perform on Sept. 24. Well-loved singer known for his powerful vocals and American Idol Season 8 finalist Adam Lambert will sing his heart out on Sept. 25 while best-selling female artist of all time Mariah Carey and young famous rapper Sean Kingston will give their first ever performances on Sept. 26.

Post-race parties

There will be two star-studded after-parties with glamorous fashion shows on hour up the circuit. Expect no slowing down at the Andaz Lounge Singapore and Jenkins Lounge Padang Singapore as the Ritz Carlton Millenia Hotel is fuelling Asian scene celebrities and race drivers hung out amidst the beats of top DJs on Sept. 25 and 26.

The Podium Lounge is another favorite oval to party destination of this Singapore F1 season's glitterati. From Sept. 24 to 26, partygoers can expect to encounter many high-flying personalities that the F1 scene attracts and enjoy nightly fashion shows and music by international and local DJs.

Rev-Up@Orchard

At Rev Up@Orchard, those with a taste for **modern art can feast their eyes on a grand** showcase of breathtaking visual effect featuring new media and digital arts. From Sept. 17 to 26, spectators can explore the street and 'multi-coms to life' with new-wave interactivement and 3D visual shows that include virtual fashion shows, video walls as well as window-ogle.

Chippendales

This year, there's also the experience of cancelled evening with the Chippendales, the world famous all-male touring show that is known to visit highly sexy yet stylish presentations. The group's production features a variety of electrifying performances, per-

Getting only chairs from men in suits to rugged cowboys. Expect to be enthralled from Sept. 24 to 26.

Warriors of Brazil

Also a highlight is the Warriors of Brazil. These world famous drummers from Copacabana and Brazilian musicians are expected to wow the crowd with exhilarating performances at the Grand Park from Sept. 24 to 26. With their mesmerizing and sexy sounds, back flips and limbo moves, this group will whoop it the enthusiasm for the GPSS lifestyle much further.

To book exclusive address and 2010 Formula One™ Singtel Singapore Grand Prix all-in-one package, call Singapore Air at (632) 753-0151 or 52 or 7568809 ext. 7003 or log on to www.singaporeair.com, or call Red Rock Travel at (632) 759-0634 or visit www.redrocktravel.net.

To directly purchase race tickets, visit www.singaporegp.sg, www.ticketworld.com.ph, or call Ticketgod at (632) 339-4347.

With so many varied and exciting events during the 2010 Grand Prix Season Singapore, it's time to experience RaceSingapore the way you want it! For more information, visit RaceSingapore.com.

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YEAR 2

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Oct 4 to 10 RESTAURANT WEEK '10

Wine Depot brings you Restaurant Week where 100 of the Philippines' finest Restaurants will showcase a special menu for less than P1,000 served with premium wines from Wine Depot, 100% Arabica coffee from Vittoria and authentic Italian water from Santa Vittoria! To see who joined us this year, visit www.winedepot.com.ph

"So that's an overview, Restaurant week is an incredible opportunity for us to create new flavors and dining experiences that are not on our regular menus. But as a patron, it also allows her to delight in the craft of many colleagues who keep making our city's dining that much more colorful" – Lulu, Restaurant Owner, La Rotisserie

"So that we can promote what the best restaurants in Manila has to offer... good food...good wine.... good times..." -Chef Mark Bracewell, Executive Chef, Marriott Hotel Manila

"In Cebu, we are looking towards promoting a wine culture at the Mactan Trade Place. At the end of the day, it's all about bringing it closer to the people, and The Restaurant Week provides this opportunity." Stephen Wilderink, Food & Beverage Manager, Mactan Trade Place Cebu

"What is a passion that we all share here at Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila. We enjoy delighting our guests with unique wine and food pairings that we hope, will encourage more people to love wine as we do." -Edouard Dempsire, Food & Beverage Director, Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila

BPI Express Credit highlife BusinessWorld

What will make you 'unfollow' someone on Twitter?

By Nico Mark Sablay

'If the person is annoying.' –Aurora Alon-Cruz, singer

"I've never unfollowed but I'm likable and if they say something completely obnoxious, stop tweeting, or get boring." –Oliver Pacheco, makeup artist

"I will unfollow someone if he or she is trying to dramatic or giving too much information. I don't like seeing everything over, anything too much. I never want to ruin my day." –Aubrey Miles, Santino Philacarlos Celebrity Showbiz consultant

"... When the person starts to spew comments that aren't aligned with my personal values like decency and integrity." –Rhoda Cedro, band vocalist and DJ

'Too many useless updates!' –Donna Bonoan

Boring updates. Back-stabbing. Fetid words." –Chad Arriola

"I'd definitely unfollow if someone just talks about nonsense and such. Twitter as not of a chatterbox. I follow a bunch of celebrity Twitter accounts, by the way. I once followed a local female celeb but ended up unfollowing her because her tweets were annoying. Just can't stand following her stalk through because I think she is so cooler." –Donna Nevarez, 20

"I don't tweet much so I don't have any answer to that, but as with Facebook and other social networking sites, I unfriend/unfollow people who always post 'angst' comments or post emotic-dedicated-to-his-ex-girlfriend-after-he-all-to-you." –Margo Francia

"... While that person starts tweeting about recipe swaps or nonsense and such random things like what he had for breakfast, lunch and dinner (unless he's Andrew Zimmern) and that he or she is sooo busy and doesn't have to time to finish whatever." –Abel Lim

"I'll unfollow if they get obnoxious or if they're always nagging like the bad kids, even if it's only on Twitter." –Nina Sinjueco, unfollowed this girl who always posted mega tweets, and thought that she was thought provoking

"I prefer to be followed rather than follow others." – Alfred Dakila

"I will unfollow someone like Mo Twister because he is obnoxious." –Cris Ramos , DJ/Hollywood wannabe

"I will unfollow someone if he or she is trying to dramatic or giving too much information. I don't like seeing everything over, anything too much. I never want to ruin my day." –Aubrey Miles, Santino Philacarlos Celebrity Showbiz consultant

"I unfollow people who have an unhealthy level of crazy-crazy tweets in their display. They make me want to throw up. Either that, or I'll unfollow." –Ingrid Nerio, model and blogger

"I'm not actually on Twitter, but if I was I would unfollow someone if he or she is trying to dramatic or giving too much information. I don't like seeing everything over, anything too much. I never want to ruin my day." –Andrea Babao

'We don't have Twitter in China.' –JR Valentin

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Generation glee

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K-POP CONVENTION
Sept 4 • 12NN • Event Center

TAMIYA ASIA CUP 2010
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TOY KINGDOM'S MOTOR MADNESS
Sept 18-19 • 10AM • Event Center

SKECHERS STREET DANCE BATTLE YEAR 6
Sept 25-26 • 4PM • Event Center

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■ Rom-com has its feet planted firmly on the ground /F3

Editor Nestor U. Torre ● Assistant Editor Rina P. Jimlo
SATURDAY Special

Irreverence, youthful exuberance energize 62nd Emmy awards

By Nestor U. Torre

MOST OF the time, television plays second fiddle to the movies, which have traditionally held the biggest and most widely viewed awards shows in the entertainment world, the Oscars, followed by the Golden Globes.

Lately, however, the Emmy awards for television have been attracting more viewers than ever, proof positive that TV is no longer the movies' poor relation.

This is even more strikingly the case in the Philippines, where the production slump that has effectively left Filipino movies for a decade now has enabled television to come into its own as the current "happening" medium in the country.

Thus, when the 62nd Emmy awards were telecast live via satellite last Monday, viewers were inordinately interested in the shows and individual artists who were hailed as the year's best.

Breezy start

The awards show got off to an unusually breezy start when program host, Jimmy Fallon, got some of his friends in the biz, including Randy Jackson, Jane Lynch and Betty White, to "spontaneously" perform a big opening number staged in "Glee."

In fact, it soon became clear that the youthful exuberance and irreverence found in "Glee" would be the overnight's theme, with participants in the awards show crying in scene on point of unpredictability and sometimes—successfully.

The most successful innovation in this regard was Fallon himself, who did a series of quick costume and character changes to add an extraneous edge and verve to his spoofs.

FALLON: His quick costume and character changes added unconventional edge and verve to his spoofs.

Part of the night's winners were first-timers, like Aaron Paul, Best Supporting Actor for "The Closer," and Archie Panjabi, Best Supporting Actress for "The Good Wife."

Accent on youth

To be sure, veteran actors also

INDEPENDENCE F3

One-woman play ignites Monique's activism

By Rina P. Jimlo

MONIQUE WILSON celebrates her 20th year in theater with the local staging of the controversial one-woman play "My Name is Rachel Corrie," which ends its limited run tonight at Music Museum (call 896-5007). It's easy to see why the award-winning production ignites the actress' passion as an artist and activist.

WILSON: Stars in "My Name is Rachel Corrie."

Inspiring

Monique may have done more than 100 plays in her lifetime, but the role portraying the American activist is one of the most fulfilling and inspiring! During a break in the play's run—

interview

—she only did's weak, we asked Monique some questions:

What is the hardest thing about playing Rachel Corrie?

The most difficult is ensuring that Rachel's words are served with **[illegible]** dignity. All the words in the play are hers, from her diaries and letters—there's nothing fabricated, so there should also be no fabrication in terms of emotions. The important thing is to see her observations and

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2 VAMPIRES SUCK
3 DESPICABLE ME (Digital 3D)
4 THE LAST EXORCISM
5 GOING THE DISTANCE
6 THE EXPENDABLES
7 DESPICABLE ME

METRO EAST

1 DESPICABLE ME
2 DESPICABLE ME (Digital 3D)
3 SA'YO LAMANG
4 VAMPIRES SUCK
5 THE LAST EXORCISM
6 THE EXPENDABLES
7 GOING THE DISTANCE
8 CUTS & DOOS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE

NOVALICHES

1 PLAYBACK @ 25: KUWENTONG 'SAYE-KWENTO'
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3 SA'YO LAMANG
4 MAMMARAZZI

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1 SA'YO LAMANG
2 GOING THE DISTANCE
3 DESPICABLE ME
4 IN YOUR EYES

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1 DESPICABLE ME (Digital 3D)
2 MAMMARAZZI
3 CUTS & DOOS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
4 SA'YO LAMANG
5 GOING THE DISTANCE
6 THE EXPENDABLES

IMUS

1 VAMPIRES SUCK
2 GOING THE DISTANCE
3 SA'YO LAMANG
4 DESPICABLE ME

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1 GOING THE DISTANCE
2 DESPICABLE ME
3 SA'YO LAMANG
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1 SA'YO LAMANG
2 IP MAN 2
3 CUTS & DOOS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE

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1 CUTS & DOOS: THE REVENGE of KITTY GALORE
2 MAMMARAZZI
3 SA'YO LAMANG

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1 DESPICABLE ME (Digital 3D)
2 SA'YO LAMANG
3 MAMMARAZZI
4 THE EXPENDABLES
5 IP MAN 2
6 IN YOUR EYES / CUTS AND DOOS 3

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1 DESPICABLE ME (Digital 3D)
2 IP MAN 2
3 MAMMARAZZI
4 THE EXPENDABLES
5 SPLICE
6 SA'YO LAMANG

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2 SA'YO LAMANG
3 THE EXPENDABLES
4 IP MAN 2

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Animal-flick sequel is a relatively frisky romp

By Nestor U. Torre

MOVIES ABOUT animals differ in terms of quality, from affecting and delightful to really tele-pics and even annoying. Most of all are some unfortunate pointsplit productions that make their creatures' characters "talk" a blue streak, complete with mouths moving "like humans."

The classic talking horses and gigolo aren't so bad. What really take the cake are the not-so-fun human-part characters who are all dressed up in flashy designer duds, replete with wigs and diamond-studded fangs (gnashed vision).

So, whenever a new animal movie opens in town, we tend to look at it askance before going into the latest rinsimilt-genre-a-gender.—MGM/UA/CE gone in in our majority position? Read below believe it.

Visual gimmickry

That's why it took us a while before we decided to give the sequel, "Cats and Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore," a gang-ho go. To make things dodgier, the version we watched was in 3D—which would have entombed us in your face cuteness and visual gimmickry in an overdrawn all-pulling and gag-to-choking degree.

—So, what's the verdict? The good news is that the doggone-and-feline flick not the fifty entertainment it threatened to be. Its actual plot and conflict may be farand-fantastic (a-word organization of dogs saves the human race from the threat of a world domination mounted by a similarly sound group of many super-felines led by the aforementioned Kitty Galore—we mistook to the Pussy G. in the James Bond flick).

The sequel's premise may be the cost, but what makes it droll is the fact that the production takes its James Bond spoof to stratospheric and even intergalactic heights, complete with gimmicked, top-secret command centers, futuristic missile vehicles, fancy spy gadgets, complex satellite systems, etc.

In other words, this is no budget production done on the cheap with styla few lazy sight gags and tired running jokes going for it. You still have to leave your ills and hats at the box office, but as actual Bobi go, "Cats and Dogs 3" is a relatively frisky romp.

MEOW. Voices private role in "The Revenge of Kitty Galore."

Versatile

It's inside sorts better by the fact that the pivotal role of Kitty Galore is voiced by Bette Midler, whose versatile vocal chops make the character even more ribbly evil than perhaps originally planned.

Best of all, the movie eventually shows that the age-old enmity between cats and dogs need not be repentment-resistant-retention-conditions.

It turns out that, aside from Kitty and her vicious cohorts, other cats also love their humans enough to eventually give the antagonists doggies a helping paw, just in the nick of time to save the day of battle in favor of theirs and the humans they want to save from the evil felines' dastardly plot.

How about that! If cats and dogs can get together, there's hope for everyone!

LOTUS POND

R. Infirmida and S. Simmonds

Guidance from Chinese sayings

WE ALL need good attitudes and values to help us get through life. Here are some Chinese sayings to guide us on our journey:

"Anything that comes into contact with vacuation will be stained red; anything that breathes ink will be dyed black." —One's environment will be influenced by the company he keeps.

"For as a single spark can start a prairie fire, a minor problem may develop into a major disaster." Always preserve problems from arising and escalating.

"As long as good talks remain, there shouldn't be any shortage of firewood." While there is good news, there's happiness.

Standard

"Magistrates are allowed to keep decent houses, while common people are forbidden to light lamps." A double standard exists between officials and citizens. For the good of society, there should be only one.

"Just as nature keeps renewing itself, a gentleman works unceasingly at improving himself." It is best to maintain and change traditionally for one's betterment.

"Till the end of his life, a silkworm keeps spinning silk. Till it burns itself out, a candle keeps providing light." A person's service of the country should be unconditional, selfless and tirelessly.

One-woman play ...

From page F1

experiences from her point of view, and in contrast with them.

In the end, it didn't seem difficult, because I share her views about the suffering of the Palestinian people—I empathize in a similar way! There's a feeling of horror, disbelief, disappointment, rage—and, as an artist, an overwhelming need to do something meaningful to make their constant suffering visible to others.

Which actresses do you admire?

Two names come to mind: Vanessa Redgrave in my favorite Ibsen always-been-acted version and a superb actress—she plumbs every character's soul. Her solo one of the first celebrities who went to Dubrovnik and spoke up about the injustices happening there when no one else was brave enough to do so—and that was still in the '90s!

She suffered a backlash from America, which banned her from Broadway and Hollywood for years. But, truth is her spectacular gift that they couldn't really suppress her talent for long.

I admire her courage—she was never afraid to stand up for what she believed in. She makes me think about what I would be willing to stand up for—and how far I'd go to fight for it. But, I believe it's also those qualities—empathy, compassion, etc.—that make for the good actress she is.

My dream of meeting her came true when she invited me to perform with her in Cannes at a fundraising concert for orphans in 1992. It was overwhelming. I thought she'd be—humble, inspiring and real.

Like Vanessa Redgrave, Jane Seside stood up for what she believed in (she spoke up against the evils of war) and, for a while, her career also suffered for it—but not for long. She is still considered one of Hollywood's iconic actresses.

Janie has become a friend, because she is on the board of Wow—the resource group headed by Eve Ensler ("The Vagina Monologues"), she continues to work tirelessly to end violence against women and children. I first met her at the Vilar summit in Iowa. First we just were humbling. I performed with her at Wow's 10th anniversary show in New Orleans—and she hasn't changed. She's amazing!

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Rom-com has its feet planted firmly on the ground

By Rachael Love

"GOING THE DISTANCE" doesn't register that far up on the laughs meter. But romantic comedy is many-sided and it must be said the feel-planted hasn't-on-the-ground.

The difference is in the details—while the movie has all the plot points and features you'd expect from your usual run-of-the-mill romcom, it's not afraid to feel out the depths of its flaws more the usual rom-com limits couple have to face.

Assigned by Geoff Lillemoe and helmed by Nanette Burstein, the film seeks to keep it real and, for the most part, succeeds. This is mostly due to the performances of the film's two likeable leads, Drew Barrymore and Justin Long, who have quite a bit of good, old-fashioned chemistry going for them.

'Lily' things

Whether it's because they've established romantic partners (or real life) or just good actors is beside the point—what's important is that it works. Long and Barrymore play off each other with ease and their comedic beats and sexual tension are, when the script fully deserves any and the 'silly' things.

Long is Garrett, a 30-something record producer for a small label in New York who, on the night he breaks up with his girlfriend, meets Erin (Barrymore), a grad student working on a dissertation for a newspaper. They're both mildly depressed—he because he got dumped and she because, as she puts it, "I'm 24. I'm an intern. I'm going to get wasted."

Neither is looking for anything permanent, particularly since Erin is going back to San Francisco to finish grad school in a few weeks' time. But, as a sunny date turns into dinner, it only takes a short time for people to fall in love.

Despite having jobs and homes on opposite coasts of the United States—New York and San Francisco are about 3,000 miles apart—Garrett and Erin try to make it work. But, being the same jokes in full, as anyone who's ever been in a long-distance relationship would know.

Testing said enthusiasm notwithstanding, there are more than a little bumps around the edges, especially since there doesn't seem to be a solution to their dilemma. As such, it falls to real life. Best how to command with the high price of airline tickets and the scarcity of jobs as their respective fields. Instead, scripted contrivance.

Issues

By far the biggest problem, "Going the Distance" manages to strike issues more than even one film. Nobody seems that low will prevent even issues like the global economic recession and the rising cost of living.

While the production is to be commended for its honesty, however there seems to be something a little off with the script's timing and dialogue, which is sometimes unnecessarily profane-ridden.

Luckily, Long and Barrymore's chemistry saves the talent-supporting duties. Despite being genres that seem to come packaged with-in every rom-com—the supporting characters, Garrett's best friend Dan, the sexual gross friends, etc.—Christian Applegate as Erin's sister comes close to stole her scene, as do-on Isabella and Charlie Day as Garrett's oddball friends, Box and Jon.

LONG AND BARRYMORE: Long-distance relationship.

ESSAY BEE Q&A

What is the Philippine counterpart of Sundance?

By Jocelyn Valle

OUR Q&A this week:

What is the Philippine counterpart of Sundance Film Festival?—Melvin Mendez, Singapore

Like the Sundance Film Festival, Cinemalaya's goal is to promote indepen-dent cinema and give aspiring filmmakers a push. It is in years of existence, a good number of entries is competitive as those for features and short. Films have won awards in international film and a few have found an audience in the local cinemas.

And the decade-old Cinemanila International Film Festival is a venue for both local and foreign filmmakers to showcase their movies and for audiences to appreciate diverse cinematic themes and styles.

Robert Pagbilao, whose character is in 2009 movie with Paul Soriano's "Patch Cruddy and the Sembrano Kid," which inspired the renaming of the Utah/US Film Festival in 1991, has like-minded counterparts in local show biz. But, the iconic American star's efforts have been unmatched.

Boutique

Catching "Gremlins" recently on TV reminded me of Phoebe Cates. Where is she now?—Rene Brito, Dumaguete

The lovely actress with Filipino ancestry is in New York running her own boutique called Blue Tree, which opened in 2005. She is called "Our Fearless Leader" by her staff and headquarters most of the store's merchandise—from clothing to home goods and gift items—during her travels across the globe.

Cates has been married to Kevin Kline since 1989. Their teenage kids, Owen Joseph and Greta Simone, had their film debut in "The Anniversary Party." In 2001 directorial collaborators of Jennifer Aniston, Leigh and Alan Cumming. But she's known the Oliver couple.

The actress allegedly agreed to appear

CATES: Kevin Kline's lovely wife is part Filipino.

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'Despicable' but lovable

By Rito P. Asilo

NOW DEPICTED good people in the bad books, and what makes them so like us, come? For Gru (voiced by Steve Carell), the hero-antihero of Steve Coffin and Chris Renaud's 3-D animated feature, "Despicable Me," it isn't about money or world domination, but his constant craving for maternal affirmation. As every new "conquest" is greeted in confusing his favorites, hard-to-please mother (Julie Andrews) prevail.

But, when brilliant young thief, Vector (Jason Segel), steals one of the Great Pyramids of Giza in Egypt, assuming Gru as the world's No. 1 supervillain, the latter decides to up the criminal ante—by conspiring to steal the moon! With the help of Dr. Nefario (Russell Brand) and his bumbling pill-shaped Minions, Gru gets his hands on a shrink ray—that Vector manages to steal from him!

Perfect foil

To retrieve the shrink ray Gru hatches the perfect plan to get inside his arch nemesis' almost impenetrable lair—and finds the perfect foil for Vector's cunning genius: He "temporarily" adopts three orphans from Miss Hattie's House for Girls: Margo, Edith and the unicorn-loving Agnes, who think they're living and spending a vacation there!

It doesn't take long for Gru and his ugly monster dog, Kyle, to warm up to their young "visitors." Soon, the threesome tame the master thief's sinister world upside-down and surprisingly brings out his latently soft side. But, who would have thought that the precocious girls would also steal somethings from Gru—his heart!

Carell is a delight as the hard-nosed baddie who will stop at nothing to get what he wants. But, his yellow, pill-shaped minions almost take the comedic spotlight away from him—not only because of their hilarious gibberish and eagerness-to-please demeanor, but also due to their unknowing loyalty to their beleaguered master.

Less saccharine

It would have been easy to dismiss the movie because of its predictable role (children help a common assault, but innate goodness), but the production pulls some pleasant surprises: It has a cleverly told and tightly paced narrative whose humor is more off-kilter than usual, with characters that are less melodramatic—and more real.

So, when Gru is torn between stealing the moon and attending the dance recital of his adopted daughters, you wonder aloud how high the stakes are for him? His young wards don't just give Gru the acceptance he's been yearning for, they also make him realize that there's more to life than villainy—and help him bring out the hero hiding behind the hood.

Yes, the story gets admirably to the end, but who says a "dark" movie has to have a grim finale to be good?

"DESPICABLE ME." There's more to life than villainy.

AM/FM

Let's give radio dramas another chance

By Ronald G. Mangubat

LONG BEFORE "Gulong ng Mali" and "Mga Mata ni Angelita" were made into movies and serialized on TV they were long-running radio dramas. The former was penned by Lina Flor in the 1950s, while the latter was written by Rimario Feliciano and became a hit radio drama from 1975 to 1979.

Sadly, like the buffalo, radio drama are becoming an endangered species, eclipsed by the popularity of movies, television and the Internet. This is unfortunate because, as a child who grew up listening to the radio, we believe that part of our sensitivity can be attributed to the many hours we spent listening to radio dramas.

Sound effects

In the confines of our room, our imagination grew as we listened to how the interplay of voices, music and sound effects created stories that moved and helped us understand life a little better.

In many First World countries like the United States, despite the proliferation of hi-tech media forms, there are people who support the revival of radio dramas. An example is Fred Greenhalgh, a young writer whose passion for the genre led him to produce the monthly "Radio Drama Revival," which is aired in Portland, Maine's community station, www.wmpg.org, each second.

Of the 600-plus radio stations all over the Philippines, didn't all are drama-wrote between 12 a.m. and 2 p.m. and a half hour every night. We caught some of them recently: "Tagpuan: Crimen Sabado," an online drama about a former priest who left his vocation to seek justice for the victims of a deadly tsunami in Hacienda Valencia.

FERNANDEZ. Voices the villainess in ABS-CBN's "Sagrado: Crisanto Salvador."

The program is full of action and flight scenes, with the protagonist battling a horse and encountering gunmen with villains. The voice of the villainess belongs to Luz Fernandez, who has escaped every unscrupulous role on the airwaves. And "Makinang Pantalasan," a drama about romantic crimes, featured the friendship of two friends – a police officer and a drug dealer.

Development

In the future, we trust that writers of radio dramas would be more creative in terms of themes, plot and dialogue development. They should bear in mind that today's listeners are younger and more imaginative, so using dialogue like "tsatsu na ako si, alkisalonan ka na ang ano" are outdated.

Young listeners who have been weaned on TV soaps should try listening to radio dramas for a change. The absence of visuals might take some getting used to, but they'll soon realize that the audio experience will encourage them to use their imagination more.

E-mail: pugrich@gmail.com

Thailand hosts agri-based trade fair

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

VIV ASIA is one of the biggest agriculture-based exhibitions in the region that focus on aquaculture and livestock. The exhibition's 2011 edition will be held at Nimi Bangkok on March 9-11 next year.

Its organizer, HCC Exhibitions, has seen the export potential of the Philippines, which ranks second in the number of visitors attending the exhibitions for nearly two decades now.

Industry

For the aquaculture industry, MIO and VIV Exhibition Europe are launching Aquatic Asia 2011 at VIV Asia (visit www.vivasia.nl and www.aquatic-asia.net).

"Technology is crucial to the growth of the livestock and aquaculture industry in the Philippines and the rest of Asia," assured Stompudi Lucidas-Jeratic, senior project manager of MIO. "It is key to improving productivity and efficiency as well as maintaining high food safety standards."

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LIVESTOCK and aquaculture industry gets a boom from VIV Asia exhibition.

Irreverence, youthful ...

From page F1

won their share of awards (Jim Stewart of "The Daily Show" won his eighth consecutive Emmy), but the accent on youth was further fleshed up by the first trophy awarded to Jim Parsons, the nerdy kind of "The Big Bang Theory."

Also evident was the Kimmyt now openness to edgy characters and themes, like the tattooed-mind-fetish dealer in "The Closer" and Al Pacino winning Best Lead Actor in a Miniseries or Movie for "You Don't Know Jack," where he played euthanasia advocate Dr. Jack Kevorkian.

Last effective was the show's "experiment," giving viewers a chance to write some of the show's spots via Twitter. Most of the winning publicity "scintillating" most (other than some) is-dimming than quiet-seeming should be left to the professionals.

All told, however, the 62nd Emmy Awards show was a relatively lenient viewing experience, reassuring that the television medium continues to dynamically reinvent itself.

What is the Philippine ...

From page F4

in the movie as a lover in Jerusalem, who's been a friend since they costarred in 1983's "Star Times at Sidgeworth High." She considers herself retired from acting since the early 1990s. It looks like Owen Joseph will pick up from where his mother had left off, because his follow-up project, "The Squad and the Whale," has earned him rave reviews!

E-mail: lyrella2008@gmail.com

'Salitang Pinoy' books ...

From page F4

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'The 13th Day'

"The 13th Day" a film based on the memoirs of Lucia Santos, one of the three children in Portugal to whom the Blessed Virgin Mary to offer a message of hope to the world, will be screened on Sept. 8 at Ayala cinemas as a benefit of the Ampu-tata feeding program. For group sales, call 632-1000 or e-mail imfo@imfoinfo.com.ph/2thday@gmail.com.

Top AM station

DyMM Radyo Patrol 630 topped all AM stations in the June 2010 Nielsen Mega Manila ratings, with an audience share of 20 percent. Its television counterpart, ABS-CBN's Balitang, also takes as the top cable news channel. The station's most popular shows include "Tambalang Balita sa Radyo" and "S.R.O."

Movies on TV

Today on HBO at 7 a.m., "Kung Fu Panda," Tomorrow at 2:35 p.m., "He's Just Not That Into You," 8pm, 6:45 p.m., "Black Hawk Down." Sept. 7 at 2:20 p.m., "Bad Santa 2: The Odd Couple 2." Sept. 8 at 9 a.m., "Monsters vs. Aliens." Sept. 9 at 2:40 p.m., "Chandni Chowk to China." Sept. 10 at 5:30 p.m., "The Story of Us."

On Cinemax today at 6 a.m., "The String." Tomorrow at noon, "They Marry for Me." Sept. 6 at 6 a.m., "Into the Wild." Sept. 7 at 7:30 a.m., "99 Bottles." Sept. 8 at 5 p.m., "Chameleon." Sept. 9 at 2 p.m., "Wendell & Vinnie." Sept. 10 at 7:45 a.m., "Make It Real."

'Camp Rock' costars praise Fil-Am actress

LOS ANGELES—When the makes up, she looks like a brown queen," Alyson Stoner declared Anna Maria Perez de Tagle, her "Camp Rock" costar and fan name on the current concert road tour tied in with the TV movie. "That's every day." Alyson said in our recent interview with the cast in New York. "She's like a doll—she's beautiful inside and out. She has a wonderful, pure voice. I enjoy working with her."

Anna Maria (who portrays Ella), Alyson, the Jonas Brothers and Demi Lovato are back in "Camp Rock 2: The Final Jam," the sequel to the No. 1 cable TV movie in the US in 2008. In addition, they perform live in shows held in large venues across the US that require them to travel in a caravan of buses. Matthew "Mitch" Finley and Jordan "Caitlyn" Francis are sharing a bus with Anna Maria and Alyson.

Alyson plays Caitlyn Gellar, a diva instructor, in the sequel, which premieres on Disney Channel on Sunday, Sept. 5, at 7:30 p.m. In real life, she's been choreographing professionally for a couple of years, with credits that include the movie, "Step Up." So, Alyson's praise about Anna Maria's dancing skills is significant. She said, "Anna Maria didn't really dance until 'Camp Rock' 1." Now, she's dancing before thousands every night like a trooper."

The Jonas Brothers were also effusive in their praise of the

granddaughter of Sylvia Le Flore, Jonas said, "Anna Maria is awesome. She's a great part of the family. In fact there [were more]." Joe chimed in: "She's an incredible talent." Nick, for his part, remarked, "She's one of the most talented vocalists I know. She has a big, bright future ahead of her."

Mitch, who plays Luke, the standout performer in the rival camp, studied, "Anna Maria is not the kind girl I thought she would be. She's laid back. But, she can also be funny."

Laughing, Jordan revealed the most important role in the bus, "We can't do No. 2—you don't want the bus to crash." Still chuckling, he told me another role addressed to the Filipino-American singer-actress: "Anna Maria, don't take my crown. Those are my pop tarts!"

Meaghan Martin (Tess Tyler in the movies) quipped, "We joke that Anna Maria doesn't seem to sweat. She's like the perfect human being. And, I love her long name."

Penn Badgley opens up

Back in LA, we talked to "Gossip Girl" star, Penn Badgley, who opened up about his life with costar and girlfriend, Blake Lively. "When we're apart, it's certainly more important getting" for some mind about the upcoming shows and being together in public. "When we're together, they might recognize either of us. So, we're always making jokes—and this is going to sound awful—about where the more famous one. Like, we never get a return service ride, so it must be the other one."

"You have to, because it's ridiculous," Blair remarked on the importance of having a sense of humor about all the attention. "When you see these girls coming up, they can get a little crazy."

Penn appears in the comedy film, "Easy A," about a high school student (Emma Stone) who uses the rumor mill to advance her social and financial standing, and she dislikes Maggie Gyllenhaal's role in "Gossip Girl," which documents a 24-hour period in the early stages of the financial crisis in the US.

"It's important to do things again[,] creatively and professionally," he stressed. "Every movie is because we're all a team—we're doing it together. Maggie [Gyllenhaal] might be invited to a romantic relationship, it's totally different when it comes to professional matters.

"Blake and I are supportive of each other. There's absolutely no competition or jealousy. Her career has taken off in a special way," he said of Blake's rise. She's in the first official directed "Gossip Girl" movie, which premieres on Thursday, Sept. 9, at 8 p.m. on HBO.

DI TINGLE. Breast fed, invisible and soft.

Tours" and "Green Lantern."

"We don't work together a whole lot on the show," he explained. "We have a lot of time apart, but we also have time together. That's probably what gives us a good balance."

Penn was asked about the scene in the fact that the "Gossip Girl" cast has been shot for their sexual exploits, while in "Easy A," a girl who spreads a white lie about losing her virginity finds that it's not that easy to put out a raging rumor.

To rumored, "Look at a character like Chuck Bass (played by Ed Westwick), who's a complete sexaholic and yet, he's revered in Gossip Girl. Whereas females character hasn't ever slept with anybody and yet, she's ostracized.

"High school is much more of, I don't know, a place of mistakes," Penn "Easy A is set in high school, while 'Gossip Girl' has actually moved to the college world. In the latter, there are a lot of sex, and we keep sleeping with the same people. In that world, nobody can really judge the other."

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Notable religious offerings go 'into the light'

By Rica Arevalo

LAST WEEKEND, we were in Hamtramck to visit the Auxiliary Bishop of San Fernando, Most Rev. Pablo Virgilio David, D.D., on his consecrated-first Gospel show, "Mga Ilaw Ng Ilaw."

In producing a religious show, he says, "It's to connect—to bring a different way. How do you build an audience? It's not there waiting for you. We produced the show in cable TV and radio formats. We do cable so we literally cable channels who go on to free air-time. Our condition: We'll give you the show for free if you give us free airtime—and they have to show it without commercials."

Every show is a labor of love by volunteers. How did the program begin? The kick-up: months, "Marilou Diaz-Abaya turned our sermons into documentary and our sermons into a video. I told her I wanted to penetrate cable TV via a talk show, I asked her, Can you teach us how to produce one?"

Knowledgable

"She replied, 'I'd be willing to direct it for free—on two conditions: First the Bayanihan program itself. Second, find me the Word of God. I'm knowledgeable about a lot of things but not the Bible. I've been looking for someone who would dissect me to the Scriptures. I heard from your brother (columnist Randy David) that your specialty is the Scriptures. Can you come over now?'"

So, the duo made the first of their lives, "Shine In Light" to serve on its 25th season, aired in over 40 cable channels here and abroad?

Back in Manila, we met up with our friend, Dr. Emie Real, the cube, to discuss her "Saving" series with "Family Rosary Crusade" (Sundays, Studio 22, 7:9 a.m.) and "Family Matters" (Saturdays, TES, 6-7 a.m.).

She tells us, "At one point in my life, I told the Lord that I wanted to serve Him more using the gifts He gave me. Soon after I prayed, I was called into this ministry."

"Family Rosary Crusade" is a worldwide effort to promote praying the rosary while "Family Matters" encourages family values by focusing the lives of those who serve God.

What satisfaction does she get from doing the shows? "The fulfillment is from knowing that this is God's work. In my own, little way I am able to make a difference in the lives of the people who watch them. Of course, it would be nicer to get a better time slot, so that we can reach more people."

Answered prayers

Recently, Boots Anson-Roa produced and launched the religious documentary, "Into the Light: A Personal Journey of Faith, Healing and Answered Prayers" with Anne Ho," under MET's direction, and it took her traveling around Europe.

The trip to San Giovanni, she shares, is a "realization of the faithful's deep devotion to Padre Pio. Its magnificent pain ng panciwasalo sa lungsod. He healed a lot of devotees."

Two weeks before her flight to Europe, she had a hysterectomy. The doctors say because of her faith in the rosary, she's now free of the physical pain, the cold weather and the physical demands of so one of the country shoot. Her goal, she says, is "To help propagate the devotion to Padre Pio."

For a copy of "Into the Light," e-mail Boots at rojabboots@yahoo.com, or call Rent of Prime Foundation at 929-9571.

KDA. Producer and host of Padre Pio documentary.

Child performer wins plaudits in stage drama

By Bibsy M. Carballo

CURRENTLY WINNING plaudits for his first venture in theater is Martin de los Santos, the young lead of Pete's adaptation of Rabindranath Tagore's play "The Post Office."

Despite his young age, De los Santos has already had substantial exposure in television and the international film, "Shenzhouh," a Swedish-German-Danish-Nordic coproduction.

He watched the film when Marith Bonoan stole the thunder from lead actors, Gael Garcia Bernal and Michelle Williams, as the mommy of the couple's daughter. Back home in the Philippines, he children (Ana Harlan and Jo Ira Santos) of Noonie's character would her team.

Imagination

In "The Post Office," which harks to the consequences of illness and death, Martin's troublesome and

DE LOS SANTOS. His play carries the consequences of illness and death.

imagination help him do well in his role.

In Rudy Meer's adaptation, the sick child, Abel, faces the world with optimism as he meets the eccentric the barrangay servant, the town head, Hope, a unique gata vendor and his guardian, Mang Oding, and teaches them how to find wonder and beauty in their difficult lives.

Bembol Roco, who portrays Abel's guardian, revels in the renowned Manila's performances ("It's pure and honest," he said) and Joel who plays Pedda, attributes Dennis's fine performance to his being a good listener.

Martin and his alternate, Abner Dolina, continue to draw crowds to the play, which is being staged at Star Theater (Cubao) in Quezon Manila, Quezon City, until Sept. 12.

The cast also includes Jojo Oliveros, Jason Bustoil, Lucille Bustamante, Arlie Jean Chua, Jack Tiblad, the Kilpatricos Choir and the Junior Children's Choir. E-mail perchoire@gmail.com, or call 725-6344.

'Salitang Pinoy' books for non-Tagalog speakers

THELMA CUEVO ARLUMBRES has been teaching Tagalog for years in foreigners and other non-Tagalog speakers, with great success and distinction.

Her "Salitang Pinoy" Tagalog Curriculum book and three Student Book 1 and 2 include drills, writing exercises, discussion topics and visual aids to link the grammar learned, and she uses a student-friendly answer key ideal for self-study learners.

The audio CD contains recordings of the list of verb forms, careful explanations and recordings spoken by native Tagalog speakers. Cultural notes are also included to develop grammar awareness and confidence. Many continuously attest to the effectiveness of her "Talking Pinoy" books in teaching many non-Tagalog speakers how to speak and love Tagalog.

It has been noted that "most and most Filipinos who have children living abroad are increasingly interested in learning about the Philippines, and it is through the study of language that one is able to do so in a better and more informed way." So, the "Salitang Pinoy" books can be of great help to the global Pinoy as well. Call (632) 723-4342 or e-mail salitangpinoybooks@yahoo.com.

'Nick Takes Over Your School'

Nickelodeon's Nick Takes Over Your School is a nationwide program dedicated to promoting fun, sportsmanship, team spirit and physical activity. It is open to grades school children. This year, 15 schools in Metro Manila and five in Greater Manila will be part of the big invasion.

Last month, the "slime mobile" visited these schools and gave kids a chance to do the fun things their favorite Nick-toons can do, like competing the four elements like racing, doing the Funky Fish hitch like the Penguins of Madagascar, jellyfish-hopping and wobbly pants-flipping like Spongebob and the gang in Bikini Bottom. Presented by Mike and Toy Kingdom.

'Legend of Robin Hood with Olly Steeds'

Discovery Channel screens the hour-long special, "Legend of Robin Hood with Olly Steeds," at 10 p.m. on Sept. 5. The feature-length film, directed by Nicolas Finch, uses the truth and explains the legends of Robin Hood by living them himself!

Kurosawa film festival

Starting Sept. 14 at the GCF

SALUMBRES' book is ideal for self-study learners.

Greenbelt Film Festival screens the masterworks of acclaimed filmmaker Akira Kurosawa. The competition, which runs for a month, includes great movies like "Throne of Blood," "Ikiru," "Red Beard," "Rashomon," "Seven Samurai," "Yojimbo" and "The Lower Depths." Call Japan Foundation at 833-6101 to 06 or contact cmu@jfmanila.org.ph.

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